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HOW TO HELP

A MANUAL OF PRACTICAL CHARITY

BY

MARY CONYNGTON, M. A.

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New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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HOW TO HELP

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To F. C.

PREFACE

IN THE three years since this book was first offered to the public, there has been little change in the principles and methods of organized charity. More and more the emphasis has been laid on preventive work. The provision of large funds for purposes of investigation has made it possible to learn where prevention is needed and how it can be effected, while the growing closeness of coöperation between the different forces of philanthropy and reform has rendered practicable large social movements which ten years ago would have been regarded as purely chimerical. There has been a general and most desirable forward movement, but the stress has been laid rather on social justice than on philanthropy or charity.

Hence it has not been necessary to make material changes in the subject matter of this book. Some chapters have received considerable additions; wherever the point of view has changed the latest opinions have been given; and the book as a whole has been carefully revised. Its general character, however, has been preserved unaltered.

Now, as in the first instance, How to Help is offered as a practical handbook, serviceable alike to busy men and women who feel some responsibility for right treatment of the want which appeals to them from every side, to the volunteer worker who wishes to make his help as effective as possible, and to the professional worker who

feels the need both of an office manual and of a convenient summary for the guidance of inexperienced assistants and friendly visitors. To these and all others similarly engaged it is commended with the earnest hope that it may prove itself both useful and reliable, a veritable handbook for workers among the poor.

WASHINGTON, D. C.,
SEPTEMBER 25, 1909.

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HOW TO HELP

PART I.—General Principles

CHAPTER I

THE WORK—INTRODUCTORY

THE history of philanthropic effort during the nineteenth century presents some curious features, and one of the most striking is the rapid change which took place during its last thirty years. If we look over the literature of the earlier part of the century we shall find a well developed tradition of what charitable effort should be. Like many other ideals of the period, it was simple and well defined. It was largely religious in origin, and in its outward manifestation contented itself with alleviation or cure, giving little thought to prevention. Miss Yonge's very human and charming heroines, for instance, help the poor because it is a religious duty to give to the weaker brethren, or, rather, to be perfectly fair, because they can best express their love for their Master by giving to these, His poor. The problem of charitable relief takes a very simple form to their eyes. They live among people of their own race whom they have known all their days. They know every detail of their lives; they understand their habits of thought and their attitude toward the world. They give with a full knowledge of how far the character of the poor is an element in their poverty, and what will be the probable effect of their

gifts. Above all they are not assailed by any doubts as to whether these poor ought to be poor. The conception of social justice is as foreign to them as the term itself. They accept it as part of the divine order that some should have and some should want and no thought of altering social conditions crosses their minds.

Holding these views, they naturally found charity a word of easy definition. To be benevolent involved giving money and time and thought along certain well understood lines. The poor were to be looked after and kindly treated; schools, naturally church schools, should be established among them, that the children might learn their catechism and acquire a limited knowledge of reading and sewing; a conscientious landlord should not allow his villages to fall into notoriously unhygienic condition, nor oppress his laborers unduly. In addition, it was right to carry broths, medicines and jellies to the sick, and to give blankets and coals to the old and infirm; to give food and shelter to the passing beggar; to make clothes for children and to give several school feasts yearly; and these efforts, with, of course, a due amount of instruction and exhortation bestowed upon all the beneficiaries, comprised the whole duty of philanthropic man.

It would be entirely inaccurate to say that this was the only conception of charity. During the period when this ideal held sway, Lord Shaftesbury was doing his magnificent work; Dr. Chalmers was perfecting his system of neighborhood help, a system unsurpassed by any later developments; Maurice and Kingsley were calling attention to the social conditions which held thousands in enforced poverty; the absolute necessity of changes in the poor laws was forcing the problem of poverty

upon all students of public questions. Forces were at work which would in time lead to a wider and more thorough-going view of want, its causes and remedies. But the conception described above was the one which had gained the popular ear; it was set forth in novels and advocated in sermons and praised in essays, and taken for granted in appeals for charitable purposes, until it may fairly be claimed that this was the common understanding of what charity should be; and so firmly rooted was this ideal that it maintained its hold for years and years after the conditions which justified it had passed away, and after it had become actively mischievous.

In our own country a similar conception had been evolved from the conditions of rural life. The well-to-do people of the little towns knew their neighbors, root and branch. If any one were in want, every one in town knew whether it was misfortune or fault which lay back of the immediate need. The relations between rich and poor were close and personal; help could be given without patronage on the one side or humiliation on the other. And here again grew up a conception of charitable activity direct, simple, concrete. "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away," was a more immediately practicable ideal when each man knew his neighbor, and why he needed to ask, and what he would do with the loan when secured. And like the English ideal of charity, which it closely resembled, this conception took root in literature and in the minds of the people, and held its place firmly, while economic, industrial and social conditions were undergoing the most momentous changes the world has

known, and the forms of society to which it was adapted were passing utterly away.

In the early seventies the charitable people of the large cities waked up to the fact that this ideal was no longer practicable, and that the attempt to apply it to existing conditions had brought about a state of affairs among the poor which was nothing less than terrible. The exodus from the country to the city, the huge tide of illiterate immigration, then just becoming a serious problem, the reaction from the war and the period of inflation which followed it, the change in industrial methods which was substituting large companies for private employers and trusts for large companies,—all these things were filling the cities with impoverished strangers, and throwing on the charitable societies a burden for which they were totally unprepared.

No blame could be attached to these societies for their failure to meet the situation. They had been designed to carry out the ideals formed in earlier days under simpler conditions. They were wholly unfitted for this new order in which giver and receiver were strangers in the fullest sense of the word, in which the very characters and habits of thought of the newcomers were as foreign to their helpers as their language. Churches and societies and individual workers struggled bravely, but their efforts seemed lost in the huge mass of want and wrong and helplessness. No one knew what any one else was doing, unless by accident; the poor who put themselves forward might be helped; the poor who kept their self-respect and refused to beg suffered unseen. Most of the work done was alleviative, almost none preventive. Street begging was permitted, practically encouraged. Tenements of miserable con-

struction and unspeakably insanitary, made home life a mockery for thousands. Children were growing up under conditions which inevitably sapped their physical strength and their moral fibre. Men and women made their living by beggary, and saw in each new child an added source of income, because a baby gave additional force to their plea for alms.

Discouraging as were these conditions, the situation was further complicated by frequent and barefaced imposition on the part of those seeking help. The lack of coöperation among the helpers invited deception. If two relief-giving societies in the same district had no exchange of information, it was as easy to beg from the two as from one, and doubly profitable. It was equally easy to make the rounds of the different societies successively. One of the classic stories of the period is of a family who lived for an indefinite period on the repeated baptisms of the youngest baby. The mother, miserably dressed, would present herself at some clergyman's house. She belonged to his faith, she said, and she had a baby she wanted baptized, but she was not decently dressed herself, and she had no clothes for the little one, so she could not bring it to the church; would not the clergyman, in view of these circumstances, come to her house and baptize it? Naturally, the clergyman would and did; and naturally, also he would be so much touched by the scene of distress and destitution there presented that he would send the workers of his church to help, giving money and clothing. Aid would be continued for weeks, and by the time the people of that church were convinced that the family were idle and drunken, and that help given them was thrown away, the mother would be ready to apply to some

other clergyman, the baby would be baptized again and the whole round gone through with once more. The trick was discovered by accident, but no one ever knew how often that infant had been baptized.

CHAPTER II

THE CHARITY ORGANIZATION MOVEMENT

By the early seventies the situation outlined in the last chapter had become so bad that its improvement was inevitable. The very seriousness of the problem called forth the best thought which students of public questions could give, and roused philanthropists to a determined effort to cope with its difficulties. As a result of this effort came into being what is known as the charity organization movement. This movement has so profoundly influenced all the social thought of the day that although its history cannot be traced here, some attention must be given to its development and its changing attitude toward the problems of poverty.

Primarily, this movement was an endeavor to unite the disintegrated forces of good, to substitute combined for independent and often antagonistic action, to bring into philanthropy the methods of organization and coöperation which had proved so effective in the business world, and to find new ways, adapted to the changed conditions, of applying the old principles of charity and good will. Like many another movement it has accomplished far more than its originators had in mind, and has outgrown the modest conception of its functions with which it was formed.

The original intention was not to form a new organization, but merely to unite those already existing. Delegates from the charitable societies of a given place were invited to meet and form a central board, which

should be the Charity Organization Society. Under the direction of this board, rooms should be engaged and workers employed who should give all their time to serving the charitable interests of the city. To prevent duplication of effort, each society was invited to file in the central office the names of all those it was helping, and to report new applications made to it for aid. The officers and employees of the central board were to be ready at all times to investigate the circumstances of anyone applying for help, and to report the facts of the situation to the person or society making the request for investigation. If this person or society did not feel able to give the help needed, it was the further duty of the organization to strive to secure it elsewhere. Representatives of the different societies were invited to meet frequently with the central board in order to discuss the best way of meeting individual cases of need, or of dealing with problems of a general nature.

Moreover, it was understood that at the central office a careful record should be made of each case handled, with a full account of the circumstances existing when the case was first reported, together with the different methods of treatment attempted, and their success or failure. And the underlying motive of all effort on the part of the Charity Organization Society should be not merely to relieve the present want, but to find out and remove the causes leading to that want, in the hope of restoring the needy person or family to an independent position in society.

It is evident that there was nothing very startling in all this. It was merely an attempt to apply common sense and organized effort to the relief of distress. But it was so well adapted to its purpose that it met with

astonishing success. Beginning, among English-speaking people, with the formation of the first Charity Organization Society in London in 1868, the movement has spread rapidly and widely. In our own country in the little more than thirty years of its existence (the first society of the kind was organized in Buffalo, in 1877), it has been adopted in something like a hundred and forty cities, scattered throughout the United States and its island dependencies. It supports magazines and papers devoted to its special interests; it has maintained classes for training in philanthropic work, which have developed into three independent schools for such training, and have led to the establishment of innumerable courses of the kind in colleges and universities; it has created a new profession, and has added to the sentiment of charity the science of philanthropy.

In doing all this the movement has itself been profoundly modified. Three distinct phases, which might be called the repressive, the discriminative and the constructive, are visible in its history, each developing naturally from the preceding and leading in logical sequence to the next. The development has not been equally rapid in all parts of the country, so that the different phases still exist and may be studied in actual conditions. These three stages are sufficiently important in their bearing on the present situation to merit some consideration.

Perhaps it might be well to say that the second and third phases are coexistent. In the latest development of the movement the discriminative attitude is maintained toward the individual case of need, but to this has been added the wider view which takes account of the whole social field, and strives to check the causes

without himself which tend to reduce the individual to poverty.

The repressive attitude sprang directly from the causes leading to the inauguration of the charity organization movement. So much harm had been done by indiscriminate giving, the dangers of pauperizing and the evils of pauperism were so directly evident, that it was natural there should be an emphasis, even an undue emphasis, on the perils attending the giving of material relief, and an over-insistence on the need of inculcating in season and out of season self-reliance and self-dependence as the highest duties of the poor. It was so important to preach the doctrine that no help should be given without full knowledge of the circumstances that occasionally the emphasis was misplaced, and the listener gained the impression that no help should be given at all. In order to form an adequate plan of relief it was essential that all the facts possible should be learned, but the insistence upon this led some to forget the purpose, and to look upon the gathering of facts as in itself useful, to consider it an end and not a means. Moreover, it is always easier to adopt the catchwords, the technicalities of a movement than to act upon its spirit. Many took up the new phraseology and talked glibly about the need of investigation and the danger of pauperizing, with very little idea of what the one meant, or how the other was to be avoided.

These mistakes were not entirely confined to the careless and the superficial. Even among the more intelligent supporters of the new methods there were undoubtedly at times short-sightedness, a tendency to look upon the suppression of symptoms as the cure of the disease, and a failure to take the long view of an

applicant's welfare. This was natural, for it was an arduous task which the ideal demanded from the worker. To find out the real needs of the poor, and to form and carry out a plan which, while relieving their present wants, should lead to their restoration to independence, uninjured morally or physically by the experience they had gone through, required not only patience and intelligence and a genuine interest, but practical training, constructive ability and a willingness to subordinate the immediate good to a future better. It was a far easier thing to feel that self-support is a normal condition, that whoever failed to accomplish it must be to blame, and to enforce self-reliance at the risk, as it was then said, of temporary suffering, a suffering which later knowledge showed might often cause real and lasting injury to the victim.

In view of these things, it is possible that in its earlier stages the charity organization movement merited, at times and to some degree, the familiar reproaches of hard-heartedness, of rigidity and of over systematization. Nevertheless, it had within itself two principles which saved it from going to pieces on the rock of repression and which led to the development of what we have called the discriminative phase. It insisted not only on a thorough knowledge of the circumstances of an applicant, together with a careful record of what was done for him and of the results of this course; but it further urged the necessity of a really friendly and personal interest in each applicant as the only means through which help could be rendered intelligently and successfully, an interest which it sought to supply by the friendly visitor. These two principles worked together, reënforcing one another, and leading toward a common

end. As the agent studied the record of cases extending over years, and as the friendly visitor followed the fortunes of successive families, it was inevitable that each should come to see that there are times when self-support may not be an entirely desirable condition; when, in fact, it may be purchased at altogether too high a price. To take only one illustration, they came to see by actual and painful experience that when a family is kept from the need of receiving outside aid, whether by putting the children to work at too early an age, or by so over-working the mother that she cannot make a home, or by forcing children old enough to work into injurious trades, not only the family, but the community is harmed, and the temporary independence secured by such means is apt to lead to serious poverty or wrongdoing later on.

This careful record of case work and close study of the individual case, formed, in fact, nothing other than an application of the laboratory method to the problems of poverty. The large city furnished the material on which the worker must, whether he wished it or not, experiment; and as the work went on from year to year, the accumulated records of these experiments furnished the most valuable mass of sociological data ever provided for students of poverty. Studying these records, the movement passed naturally from its earlier fear of relief to the discriminative stage in which it looked upon material aid as a means to an end; important, it is true, but no more to be advocated or disapproved than a dozen other means. This attitude is equally removed from the old superficial view, beloved of the Christmas story writers, that the gift of turkeys and plum puddings and crisp ten dollar bills is all that is needed to

right any social maladjustment, and the equally unfounded view which regarded money or material relief with an exaggerated fear as inevitably perilous to self-respect, and leading almost invariably to moral enfeeblement, if not to absolute pauperism.

The movement has now reached a stage in which relief is looked upon as a means, dangerous if rashly handled, but having none the less a most important place in the category of available methods. It is recognized, however, that the facility with which temporary improvement may be secured by the use of money does expose the worker to the temptation of relying too much upon it; so added emphasis is laid upon the fact that giving material aid is never in itself sufficient. More and more insistence is placed upon the close, patient study of each case, the warm personal interest in the individual, the resourcefulness which will find the best way of making the most of each member of the family group, the comprehensive view which, keeping steadily in sight the reëstablishment of the family as a whole, works toward that end, using material relief as only one of the means for this purpose, never losing heart nor giving up the family as "unworthy" until the goal is attained, and the ranks of the dependent have been diminished by one more group transferred to the army of the normally and healthfully self-supporting. That and that only is the ideal proposed by the movement, in its present discriminative stage, and to attain that end it makes use of any means which may be at hand. Material relief falls into its proper place, shorn of the fictitious importance once attached to it, and the emphasis is placed on the comprehensive view which takes into account all the factors of a situation, th

resourcefulness which sees the way to utilize them all, and the patience and kindly interest which will persevere until the ideal becomes the real. Given these qualities, there is small danger that material relief will be abused.

CHAPTER III

THE CHARITY ORGANIZATION MOVEMENT—CONTINUED

THE close study of the individual case, and the careful preservation of the records of hundreds of other individual cases, led inevitably to a consideration of the causes of poverty en masse. The worker who dealt only with one family, or with twenty, might honestly feel that character was the determining factor in the social condition of each one of those families, and that only through improving the individual could his situation be improved. The agent who dealt in the course of years with hundreds of families, the student who applied himself to the records of thousands, could not but observe that there were certain social conditions, various large general forces, operating to reduce people to poverty, regardless of their individual merits or demerits. Free will may prevail in the moral world, but it does not in the physical, and if a man dwells in a dark and unhealthful tenement, infected with tuberculosis, if his work keeps him in unhealthy and depressing conditions, no amount of self-respect and earnest industry will ward off from him the danger of death from consumption, or from his children the likelihood of weakened constitutions and impaired strength to handicap them in their struggle against the environment which proved too much for him.

This did not mean that the workers came to regard the people among whom they labored as merely helpless puppets. All imaginable stress, it was felt, shoul

be laid on the personal equation, and no effort should be spared to make the individual energetic, industrious and forceful. But after all, there was an obvious short-sightedness in spending unlimited time in trying to raise families who had fallen into want above that want, while all the time nothing was done to check the causes which were inevitably year by year operating to bring more families into that same condition. Common sense demanded that while the efforts to improve the individual family were carried on unfalteringly, energy should also be directed to removing the preventable causes of want, and to stopping the stream of poverty at its source. As this ideal took form and became effective, the movement entered on its third and most important phase, which may be called the constructive stage.

It is only within a very few years that this effort to remove all preventable causes of poverty has been made on a large scale, and with much prospect of success. It manifests itself along innumerable lines. The campaign against tuberculosis, the agitation for better tenements, the fight against child labor, the insistence on summer schools and playgrounds, the provision of means of recreation, the fresh air work among children and adults alike, the careful treatment of mendicancy in the larger cities, the establishment of trade schools and manual training classes,—these are only a few of its manifestations. Some of these efforts would have been impracticable a generation ago. The problem of street begging, for instance, could not be constructively treated without the system of interurban help and information which has been established wherever charity organization societies are found. Child labor cannot be adequately

treated by local methods alone, and such troublesome questions as the deserting husband and the wandering family can be solved only by the united action of many forces.

The marvelous development of this preventive work which characterizes the present stage of social activity has been rendered possible only by the growth of the principle of coöperation, which has formed so marked a feature of the charity organization movement. All over the world societies formed to study and relieve poverty are recording and exchanging the results of their efforts; national conferences, held at least annually, are bringing the leaders of the work into close and inspiring contact; magazines, pamphlets, and weekly and monthly papers are constantly bringing to the public the latest discoveries; and the worker in the remotest town or village may have, the advantage not only of knowing the results which have been achieved by other workers along his chosen line of research, but of securing the instant coöperation of all the other workers, through their organized bodies, as soon as his work reaches outside of his own territory. Never before has it been possible for the forces of philanthropy to present such a united and aggressive front to the forces making for want and misery. No one, of course, supposes that poverty will be eradicated; but it is believed that it may be immensely diminished, and that a large part of the suffering which is due to social conditions rather than to the individual's fault may be abolished.

Within a few years past this latest phase of the work has broadened out into a movement which transcends the limits of any definition of philanthropy with which we have hitherto been familiar, and which its supporters

claim should be looked upon rather as a program of social justice. Most of the schools of philanthropy carry on as part of their courses investigations into social conditions; the settlements have undertaken a great deal of work along the same lines; and recently the gifts of Mrs. Russell Sage and others have made it possible to conduct similar researches on a scale entirely impossible until these means were available. A study of the data thus secured has led to a growing conviction that much of our poverty, inefficiency and even criminality result from conditions for which the individual is not responsible, and which by himself he is powerless to affect. It is felt that social and industrial conditions are so adjusted that in too many cases the heaviest burden falls on those who are least able to bear it. Whole classes, it is believed, have been cut off from the equality of opportunity which democracy implies, and for the sake both of common justice and of the community welfare, these opportunities must be assured to them. To do this, the supporters of the movement admit, will require very considerable expenditures, but it is a question whether in the end there will not be a material saving. It is merely a matter of whether society chooses to spend its money in prevention or relief, in social justice or in charity and correction. Indeed, they assert, there is really no question; we cannot afford not to take such measures; enlightened economy requires the community to check these springs of preventable want at their source, and to seek in good earnest to secure to each of its members the chance of being sound mentally and physically, properly equipped to take his part in the struggle of life, and not handi-

capped by social or industrial conditions which load the dice against the weaker party.

"No community," says one of the prominent advocates of this movement, "is so poor that it can afford to permit typhoid for lack of a filtration plant, or inefficient children for lack of good schools, or criminals for lack of playgrounds while children are growing up, or wayward girls for lack of protection, or exploited childhood for lack of a factory inspector, or industrial accidents for lack of a compensation law or an insurance system. These things are not luxuries. . . . We may send children to school, keep them out of factories, provide them with playgrounds, operate for their adenoids, and fit them for useful trades and occupations, or we may keep our hospitals and courts and prisons and charities going at their maximum capacity."[1]

This movement is as yet in its incipiency, but it is undoubtedly along its lines that the greatest progress of the next decade will take place. It is a movement, however, which concerns itself with general causes and deals with masses rather than with the individual. It springs from the charity organization movement, and is an extension of its principles, but can hardly be called a part of it.

In looking over the development of charitable work within the last thirty years, it becomes evident that one and the same idea has been its underlying principle, but that there has been, so to speak, a shifting of the emphasis. The fundamental purpose has always been to remove the poor from dependency and to restore them to the ranks of the self-supporting. At first, stress was laid on restoring them in the shortest possible time to independence, and on running the least possible risk

[1] The Survey, April 10, 1909.

of injuring their moral fibre by the administration of material relief. In the next stage, the ideal held up was to restore them to self-support in such a way that this should become their permanent condition, and that in doing it no injury should be wrought, either to society as a whole, or to the individual members of the group under consideration. In the third stage, while the second ideal still prevails for the person or family who has fallen into want, it has been supplemented by a vigorous effort to remove the social causes which may have contributed to this fall, and to keep others from suffering through these same conditions.

It would be too harsh to say that the first stage dealt only with the removal of the outward symptoms of poverty, leaving unchecked the causes which produced it; yet the practical working out of the earlier ideal often resulted thus. The second ideal cut much deeper, while the combination of the second and the third has produced the most comprehensive conception of charitable work we have yet been able to imagine—a conception which demands that each of the poor shall receive careful consideration, such help as he really needs in such quantities as to render him independent henceforth of similar help, that this shall be given in the way least likely to injure him, that so far as possible opportunities shall be opened to him to provide for himself without the need of outside assistance, and that, above all, social conditions shall be so adjusted that he shall not be forced into want through no fault of his own. Whether character is cause and environment effect, or vice versa, the new philanthropy does not attempt to decide, but its aim is so to develop character that environment shall necessarily be improved, and so to improve environ-

ment that character shall have a chance to develop. To restore the dependent to self-support, to enable the independent to maintain his self-reliance, to help both to find some higher meaning in life than the mere pursuit of food and clothing, and to give their children a fair chance of doing as well or better than their parents—such is the aim of the new philanthropy.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL WORKERS: REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

"Charity is the privilege of thoughtful persons."
—*Jeffrey R. Brackett.*

THE more serious study of poverty and the increasing endeavor to make all help remedial as well as alleviative have given much emphasis to the demand for trained workers. This demand is met from various sources. The Associated Charities of Boston for years maintained a system of training for would-be professional workers, but the first attempt to give systematic training on any large scale was the Summer School of Philanthropy, opened in 1898, under the direction of Dr. Philip W. Ayres, in connection with the New York Charity Organization Society. From this has developed the School of Philanthropy recently established in New York, giving a longer and more thorough course of instruction and practice than was possible in the Summer School. In Boston a School for Social Workers, maintained by Simmons College and Harvard University, was opened in 1904, and in Chicago the School of Civics and Philanthropy gives extended training for philanthropic or social work. In addition to these institutions, many if not most colleges and universities have added to their curriculum courses in applied sociology or in training of some practical kind, which have for their purpose the preparation for actual work, while almost every large charity organization society has some system of preparing workers.

Through these means the need for professional workers is being supplied, but there is a great demand for non-professional workers which is far from being satisfied. The professional worker alone can never do the whole work of philanthropy. He is useful, indeed, indispensable, as a leader, as a student, as an initiative force, as a general supervisor and correlator of the charitable work of a given community, but he can no more do all that is to be done than the officers of an army can themselves carry through a successful campaign. The volunteer worker is needed, in quantity, for a hundred different purposes, and since he is required in such numbers, it follows that he must, when first secured, be almost invariably an untrained and inexperienced worker.

The attitude of the professional to the amateur worker has undergone several changes. Ten or fifteen years ago it was thought that the ideal combination was attained by setting untrained workers of any kind to what was known as friendly visiting, under the guidance of professionals. The friendly visitor was assigned to some family known to his society, with whom he—or more frequently she—essayed to form friendly relations, with the purpose of enriching both lives, and especially of giving to the poorer friend the benefit of the visitor's greater breadth of view, wider experience, and, presumably, stronger character. The friendly visitor was expected to consult the professional worker regularly, and to take no important steps without his sanction. Thus the agent's knowledge and experience were extended over a far wider field than he could have covered alone, the inexperienced worker was trained by actual service without the risk of injuring his bene-

ficiaries in the process, and the family visited had the advantage of both the agent's professional knowledge and the visitor's more intimate and personal friendliness. The theory was excellent, and there is no doubt that in practice much good work was thus done, yet somehow the plan has not proved a complete success. The friendly relation often proved somewhat artificial and brittle, and though friendly visiting is still widely advocated and practiced, it is no longer looked upon as the complete solution of the problem of bringing together the House of Have and the House of Want.

In the disappointment caused by the failure to realize all that was hoped from the system of friendly visiting, some professional workers have gone to the other extreme and displayed a certain tendency to look askance on any employment of amateurs. Some even go so far as to say that only a limited number of persons have the necessary qualifications for becoming workers among the poor, and that for the great multitude the only effective way of helping is to give their money to this gifted minority, making no effort to undertake personal work, but supplying the funds for those qualified to perform it. Anyone who has seen the harm which a perfectly well-meaning but injudicious person may do when he attempts to help his poorer neighbor will feel that there is some justification for this view, but no one but an extremist will be ready to support the somewhat arrogant conclusion that only the specially trained and gifted should do personal work. Common sense and good feeling alike indicate that we have personal duties toward the less fortunate which cannot be discharged by the mere payment of money. Miss Addams has well pointed out that the awakening social conscience

demands of each something more than the individual uprightness, kindliness and well-doing which satisfied the earlier ideal. It is not enough to give; we must also do, and any conception of the importance of the trained worker which shuts out from philanthropic activity the untrained, is a mischievous exaggeration which must in time work its own cure.

The more complex problems, it is true, can best be handled by organized agencies working through trained employees, but in addition to these there exists a wide field of social and philanthropic activity which must either go untilled or be cared for by the "outsiders," the ordinary men and women whose time is well occupied with other duties, but who feel a certain responsibility toward the less fortunate, and who are not satisfied that they have done all they ought when they have referred an applicant to the nearest organized society. There is not a sufficiency of trained workers to do half or a quarter of what is to be done, and useful as their work is, perhaps its most important feature is that of showing others how to help. Also, in numerous places, trained workers are unknown, and the philanthropies of the neighborhood must depend solely upon volunteers. Every church is a center of benevolent activities, depending mostly upon the efforts of unpaid workers, who can take up such duties only as one part of an already busy life. Every pastor feels the importance of giving the young people of his church work to do among the poor, for the triple purpose of getting the work done, of developing the sympathies of the young people from a mere sentiment into an effective force, and of keeping up the supply of church workers. For all these reasons a large part of the philanthropy of today not only is being done by non-

professional workers, but ought to be and will be so done.

Yet there are one or two qualifications which are almost necessary, and several others which are highly important for anyone who contemplates undertaking any charitable work, even though his projected activity be small. The first and most important of all is seriousness of purpose. Such work means influence upon the lives of others, for good or for ill, and no one has a right to touch another's life carelessly or lightly. There is hardly any condemnation too strong for those who take up work among the poor as an amusement, giving and intending to give to it only the most casual thought, ready to drop whatever they have begun so soon as it becomes irksome, or, worse still, to carry it on intermittently as the fancy strikes them. Their work itself is bad, their example is thoroughly harmful, and their unreliability and inconsistency work out, sometimes, absolutely cruel consequences. He who would enter the field of philanthropic work must first count the cost. It may be that he can give but little time and thought, but that little should be given faithfully.

Next to this essential steadiness of purpose, possibly the most useful characteristic is a sympathetic imagination, which will permit the worker to share the point of view of those he is endeavoring to help. Whoever goes among the poor with a preconceived idea of what is the cause of their trouble and what should be its cure is liable to meet many disappointments. The poor obstinately refuse to form one class, all amenable to the same treatment. Human nature is exceedingly conspicuous among them, and the bed of Procrustes is no more available there than elsewhere. In most communi-

ties they come from a variety of nationalities; their inheritance and traditions differ from race to race; their standards of life, and more especially their social standards, though quite as rigorous as the worker's, differ widely from his, and from each other's, and the kind of advice and help which is ideal for one family is thrown away upon the next.

Self-evident as this appears to one accustomed to such work, it is far too often forgotten or ignored, with unfortunate consequences. The people who talk about the ingratitude or unreasonableness of the poor are apt to be people who have never appreciated this simple fact. For many good persons the Poor occupy the place which the economic man held among the economists of a generation or two ago. The Poor, always with a capital, are supposed to be a receptive class, either in want through their own intemperance or thriftlessness, in which case they are waiting to be reformed and set in the right path which they will thereafter follow steadily and gratefully; or else they have sunk to want through misfortune and ignorance, and are meekly waiting for some help and advice, which will be accepted with respectful appreciation, and in return for which they will unquestioningly follow out in all respects whatever line their benefactor recommends. Naturally, those who hold such views—and the description is hardly exaggerated—will be speedily disillusioned, and since their honest efforts are pretty sure to be wasted, it is only human nature on their side which makes them certain that this is all the fault of the poor, and that nobody can do much for them; "they are so unreasonable." Successful work among the poor can be based only upon some understanding of the temperament and needs of

each individual family, and the worker must be on the alert to discover how one differs from another, what are the characteristics most likely to be found in a given nationality, what are the social standards governing the particular circle in which he is working, and what personal peculiarities of the members of his group modify these general traits. The more completely he is able to enter into the view of those among whom he works, the more chance he has of bringing them over to his ideas, of strengthening their weak points, helping to develop their possibilities, and aiding them in a far truer and higher sense than by mere almsgiving.

Next to sympathetic imagination, some sense of proportion is needed. There should be some power of seeing what is the highest practicable good attainable in each case, and details should be subordinated to the pursuit of this end. It is not enough to do what will most immediately and obviously relieve the situation; in fact, doing this may perhaps cause a far worse ill than that which it relieves. There is always a tendency to magnify present good and to underestimate future evil, and to the worker among the poor, economic independence looms so large that he is tempted to purchase it at any price.

One of the most frequent illustrations of a lack of this sense of proportion is found in the attitude of many benevolent people toward child labor. A family is honestly in want, say through illness or accident to the normal breadwinners. There are children, not, it is true, of legal working age, but strong and well grown, quite able to become earners, and exceedingly anxious to do so. Is it not better, say the workers, to secure if possible an exemption from the law in such a case than to force

a self-respecting family to accept outside help? That is the most favorable statement of the case; too often, the family is in want through the desertion or wrongdoing of a parent, and those who are helping find it increasingly difficult to secure the aid needed; by bringing a little personal influence to bear one or two children can be slipped into employment somewhere, and the burden of the helpers lightened at the expense of the future strength and welfare of the child. The so-called charitable people concerned in the matter would probably admit the extreme importance of preserving children from too early employment, and the advantages of a strict enforcement of the labor laws in general, but the immediate necessities of the particular case blind them to the principles involved, and they unhesitatingly sacrifice the child to a need which could and should be met through other means.

Sometimes this disproportionate emphasis on immediate need, or on one aspect of a question, works itself out in very curious fashion. In one instance a few years ago a small circle of workers found an old woman over seventy, who was about to be sent to the almshouse, to which she didn't at all wish to go. Their sympathies were stirred, and moreover they had just been reading certain treatises on philanthropy, and were much impressed with the evils of pauperization. Pauperization, they thought, of course meant being made a pauper, and if this old woman were sent to the almshouse she would certainly be pauperized; was there no way in which she could be saved from such a fate? So they bestirred themselves, and found that she had one relative living, an orphan granddaughter of thirteen. The girl had a good home with a family who had taken her into their

household for what she could do, giving board and clothing and sending her to school. She was happy and contented, and the family liked her; she would probably have a permanent home with them. The circle of workers also found that at that time there was a demand for girls for night work in a certain factory, and that this girl could within a short time from entering earn good wages, quite enough to support both her and her grandmother.

Armed with these facts, the circle set themselves to work to make earnest representations to the family, to the girl, to the grandmother and to all acquaintances, and the change of occupation was effected. The grandmother took a couple of rooms and kept house for the girl, who went into the factory, and the circle congratulated themselves that they had saved one person, at least, from becoming a pauper. So they had, but at what cost? The grandmother was over seventy; for good or for ill, her work was done, and all that was really required for her was humane care, which would have been received in the almshouse. But the girl was just beginning life. They had taken her from a place where she was leading a contented, healthy, normal existence, having a fair chance for an education, and receiving training in real home-making. They had subjected her, at the most critical period of her life, to the tremendous physical strain of night work; they had cut her off from all chance of mental education, and shut her out from any possibility of preparation for the normal life of a woman as the center of a home; indeed, in view of the effect of night work on growing girls, it is not too much to say that as far as in them lay they were deliberately

unfitting her for the duties of a wife and mother. But they had kept the old woman out of the almshouse.

That was, of course, an extreme case, but in other forms the same problem is constantly coming up. Children are put into institutions because it is hard to secure the help which would make it possible to keep them with their mothers. Work is provided for married women, rather than for their husbands, because it is easier to make work for unskilled women than men, or because the husbands are idle or intemperate. Children old enough to be put to work are hurried into the first thing which can be found for them, regardless of whether it offers any training for the future, or whether they have pronounced capabilities for something else. Epileptics and mentally defective children are left without the special instruction and care they should have, because of the difficulty of securing such conditions. Everywhere and at all times there is a temptation to relieve the immediate need by the easiest way, regardless of the ultimate effects of such action. This is, perhaps, the commonest temptation of the charitable worker, but it is one which can be guarded against. A sense of proportion can be cultivated, long views can be taken, and any worker may learn to consider ultimate results.

Seriousness of purpose, imaginative sympathy and a sense of proportion—these are the most important qualities for a worker among the poor. There are many other qualifications which are needed; in fact, nothing which one possesses will come amiss, and there will be times when a temporary omniscience will seem absolutely indispensable. Courtesy, of course, is essential, and a sense of humor will help one through many a discouraging experience. A long list might be made of

useful characteristics, but they may all be summed up in a few words. Common sense, kindly feeling and a willingness to learn—given these, no one need fear to enter the field with a confident expectation of rendering good service.

CHAPTER V

AGENCIES FOR PHILANTHROPIC WORK

"Not to know the charities of one's own city is criminal."
—*Jenkins Lloyd Jones.*

IN EVERY city and town numerous agencies exist for dealing with different kinds of want, and some knowledge of them is almost indispensable for anybody who feels a sense of responsibility toward the poor. One may not wish to take up any form of philanthropic work, but nevertheless appeals for help will be made to one, and common humanity demands that the applicant should be directed to the place where his needs may be met. Trouble and want appear among one's own employees, past or present. Women come to the door with a tale of destitution; and homeless men stop one on the street or penetrate to the business office with their plea. We cannot guard ourselves against hearing the appeal for aid. Some few shut their ears and go on their way unheeding, and for these the charitable agencies of their community may well be a matter of indifference, but for all others they have a practical interest. No one can undertake to relieve single-handed the want which is sure to present itself. Whether we wish merely to pass on an applicant to some one capable of helping him, or to supervise ourselves the process of effectively relieving his wants, we need the aid of a wide circle of associated forces. Societies and organizations cannot and should not take the place of

the individual, but they can increase many fold the effectiveness of his efforts.

As a rule it is not difficult to obtain the slight knowledge of the organized forces of helpfulness which is needed by the average person. Nearly all of the larger cities and towns have a charity organization society or some similar body. Many of these publish directories of the philanthropic agencies of their particular communities, but even when they fail to do this they are sure to have on file reports of all the local societies. The agents in charge are naturally familiar with these different bodies, and can easily give an enquirer some account of the principal societies, what particular need each expects to meet, what are their different methods of work, who should be applied to in each, under what conditions they will give help, with innumerable other details. In places where there is no central organization, the different relief societies can usually be found listed in the directory. Naturally, little more is given here than the name of a society, its purpose and its president, or secretary, but these facts at least enable one to know whether or not any organization exists for the relief of a given kind of need, and, if it does, to whom one should apply to secure its assistance. Moreover, by going to the officers of one or two of these societies, who are apt to be experienced workers in the philanthropic field, one can usually obtain much information as to the charitable resources of the place.

It may be easier to gain a working knowledge of the relief agencies of a given community by remembering that the whole bewildering array of societies, circles, relief agencies and beneficent associations falls naturally into three fairly well defined groups—public agencies,

general private associations and special private associations. The range and importance of each of these groups differ from place to place, but there is hardly a community so small that all three will not be found, all working toward the same end, and supplying, more or less effectively, one another's deficiencies. It may be worth while to dwell upon these different groups at some length.

Underlying the whole complex manifestation of philanthropic activity is the system of public relief. The community as a whole is not willing that any of its members should absolutely perish of hunger or cold or lack of medical care, so it undertakes to supply the needs of those who are utterly helpless and friendless, or whose friends are too little better off than themselves to be able to give aid. For this reason the community maintains almshouses, where the old, the infirm and the crippled may be sheltered; it supports hospitals, wherein the ill and the injured may receive treatment, and it has some system of providing for destitute children, either by boarding them out in private families, by caring for them in some form of orphanage or home, or, in the smaller and more backward communities, by placing them in the almshouse. The insane and the feeble-minded are also cared for, either in special hospitals, or, in localities where intelligent philanthropy has made little progress, in the general almshouse.

Such aid, known as indoor relief, can be secured for the absolutely helpless in every community, but with regard to outdoor relief, or help given to an applicant in his own home, the custom varies from city to city. In some of the larger places the ground has been taken that public relief should never be given except in indoor

form; that so long as an applicant can do anything for himself, or his friends can give help, it is better to refuse him public assistance, leaving private charity to piece out his insufficiencies. In behalf of this position it is argued that many people who would exert themselves to the utmost rather than go into an institution, would be only too glad to relax their efforts at self-support if they could receive help in their own homes. Moreover the public relief authorities must deal with large numbers of applicants, with whom their relation is purely official and formal. Consequently it is not possible for them to become so well acquainted with the circumstances of the individual case as can the agents of private societies, who will give more time to make sure of the real situation, and can bring more of the personal element into their dealings. Hence the public authorities are more easily imposed upon, and this possibility of successful imposition tends to provoke unwarranted applications. This tendency is increased by the fact that many people are inclined to look upon public help as a right and to apply for it without hesitation, while they would regard themselves as losing caste if they appealed for private aid. Wherever a close investigation has been made into the circumstances of those receiving public outdoor relief, numerous instances of imposition have been found, and in many cases there is no doubt that such relief has wrought serious harm, tending directly to produce pauperism in the recipient and putting a premium on fraud and beggary. Also, wherever such help is given there is a constant possibility of its being made use of as political capital. Those charged with disbursing such help are usually elective officers and the possibilities of serious abuses along this line are obvious. For these

reasons public outdoor relief has been abolished in some of the principal cities of the country, notably in Brooklyn and in Philadelphia. Not only did this action cause no perceptible increase in suffering, but in some cases it was followed by an actual diminution in the number of appeals made to private societies.

On the other hand, advocates of public outdoor relief point out that in many cases some help given in the home will enable a family to keep together, and, while securing to them the advantages of a normal as opposed to an institutional life, renders it possible to make use of whatever earning capacity they may have, and thus diminishes the cost to the community of helping them adequately. For example, an old couple, unable to make a sufficient living, may yet make something, which, with the addition of a little help from the community, will enable them to live outside of the almshouse. A widow with young children may be able to make nearly the amount needed to keep her little ones with her, and if she receives public help in her own home the community is saved the difference betwen what it gives and the entire cost of supporting one or several of the children. A family may be brought to want by the illness or injury of a breadwinner, so that they are temporarily unable to maintain themselves, yet they may be entirely capable under ordinary circumstances of self-support. If helped over the temporary need they will again take their normal position, whereas, if outdoor help cannot be secured, the family may be broken up, and serious suffering and injury ensue.

The opponents of outdoor relief would entirely agree with its advocates in thinking these fit cases for relief in their homes, but they maintain that this aid should

come from private societies or individuals. To this argument the advocates reply that private charity cannot or will not take care of them all, that the sufferer does not know how to reach private relief agencies, whereas the public officials are known to all, and that for these and other reasons it is well for the community to give help in the home. The question is still under debate, and the custom varies from place to place, so that in each city and town it is necessary to learn by enquiry whether or not public relief is given in the home, and if so, under what conditions and to what extent.

In most of the New England communities there is a rather puzzling division of responsibility between the town and the state. If the applicant for relief has a "settlement," that is, if he has fulfilled certain conditions as to length of residence, or possession of property, or practice of a trade, or payment of taxes, the town in which he has fulfilled these conditions is liable for his care; if he has not, and if he does not possess a settlement elsewhere the state must bear the expenses of his relief. The principle underlying this arrangement, that each community should be responsible for its own poor, is thoroughly sound. But in practice some places have made their conditions so onerous that the ordinary member of the laboring classes is never likely to gain a settlement. The matter is of great importance to the public official and to the professional charity worker, but the conditions of settlement are so varied and in many places so complicated, that the non-professional worker will find it better to seek advice on each case as it rises, rather than to attempt familiarizing himself with the whole subject.

Next to the public relief agencies come the large

private societies, which might almost be called quasi-public, so extended is their work. Some of these are designed to reach one particular class of the poor, like the St. Vincent de Paul Society, which, while not refusing to help others, is mainly concerned with the care of the Roman Catholic poor, or like the Hebrew benevolent societies, organized for the special purpose of relieving suffering among those of their own race. Usually in addition to such, there is at least one large society in each city which expects to give help without regard to color, race or creed. These large societies are the chief instruments, as a rule, through which the individual may work, and their methods, and the means of securing their assistance, should be carefully kept in mind. Generally one or more of them will have districted the city and will have in each district an agent, to whom application must be made for any help needed from the society in that section. Sometimes there will be found in a city several of these extended societies, one having been organized to give help in illness, another to supply coal in winter, or to provide food or clothing, or to fulfil some other definitely limited purpose.

After these more general societies comes the third class, the innumerable small groups and organizations, sometimes connected with churches, sometimes independent, which exist for the purpose of doing philanthropic work. In a city of any size it is almost impossible to secure a complete list of these, but some knowledge of them may be obtained by consulting church year books, and by conferring with those who have been long engaged in relief work. The volunteer worker will find an acquaintance with them very useful. Their purposes are so varied that help of nearly every imaginable kind

may be secured through them. Some will give clothing, others shoes for school children, or delicacies for the sick, or secure outings for mothers and children, or, occasionally, pay rent, or provide babies' outfits, or help in a dozen other ways.

As a general rule no one of these groups, nor indeed of the larger societies, is prepared to give the amount of help necessary in cases of severe destitution or of long continued distress. Consequently, under such circumstances, it becomes necessary to call on several, applying to each for its particular kind of help which, insufficient in itself, combines with what is received from the others to make up a sufficiency. Hence the desirability of securing as wide a knowledge as possible of the different sources from which aid may be obtained, with the kind and amount furnished by each.

CHAPTER VI

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES

IT SEEMS tolerably obvious that it is impossible to help without a clear conception of the trouble for which help is needed, and of the kinds of help most likely to prove efficacious. Gaining this knowledge is technically called investigation—a word which, through a popular misunderstanding of its use, has fallen into disfavor with many. No one who is really interested in the poor is satisfied with relieving a mere immediate surface need, leaving all other aspects of the situation untouched. If one finds a family suffering for food, it is woefully insufficient to send them a dinner, leaving them otherwise unaided. The dinner will relieve their present hunger, but to-morrow they will be hungry again. Any help worthy of the name must take into account the relief of immediate and the prevention of future suffering. But the means of preventing future suffering will depend on the character of the family under consideration, its history, and its resources in the way of earning capacity, friends, and claims on public or private agencies of relief.

For instance, it is evident that if a family has been reduced to temporary and acute want by the illness of the principal breadwinner, the kind and amount of help which should be given will differ greatly from what may be required if its earning capacity at the best of times is not equal to its needs, and its condition of want has been chronic for so long that vitality has been reduced

and ambition and courage lost. Take so simple a matter as a case of severe illness in a poor family; whether the patient should be sent to some hospital or sanitarium, or a nurse, medicines and nourishing food should be sent to the house, may depend entirely upon the character of the other members. A family in serious need may have a claim for relief upon some society to which one member has belonged, or relatives of whom they have lost sight may prove able and willing to help if hunted up and acquainted with the situation, or a former employer or friend may be found who is willing to advance what is necessary. But these things, and many others bearing on the right treatment for a given case, can be learned only by careful and thorough investigation, a process which may be defined as acquiring full knowledge of the situation, ability and character of a person in want, for the double purpose of relieving that want effectively and preventing its recurrence.

An investigation of this kind is a difficult enquiry to make, requiring tact, perseverance, good judgment and knowledge of human nature. The non-professional philanthropist will do well to avoid it altogether when possible. In any place where there is a charity organization society, or any similar body, it is always possible by sending a request to it to have an investigation made by a trained worker, who will furnish a report giving the principal facts of importance to those desiring to help. Such a request does not involve any unpleasant publicity for the family under consideration, since all agents of this kind are under a professional obligation to respect the privacy of those with whom they deal, and to make known the results of investigation only to those who have a right to the knowledge. In communi-

ties, nowever, where no charity organization society exists, and where no experienced worker is available, it may become necessary for the non-professional worker to attempt investigation, in which case it is well to observe a few general rules.

In the first place, since the object is to help, great care should be taken that the family is not really injured by the methods adopted. Many seem to have acquired the idea that investigation means obtaining information of any kind by any methods, no matter how objectionable, and consequently they talk over a family's affairs and character with the neighbors, the landlord, or anyone else who seems to know them, regardless of the harm which may be done, both to the self-respect of the family and to their standing among their own class. Among the self-respecting poor the feeling against accepting aid is very strong, and if it must be done, the merest humanity demands that the humiliation of publicity should not be added to the mortification of receiving assistance. Generally speaking, one should never apply to present neighbors, landlords or employers for information. If the family have any church connections, it is usually safe to apply to their clergyman, who, it is fair to assume, will treat the matter with discretion. If they have a family doctor he also is likely both to know a good deal about them and to regard any discussion of their affairs as confidential. It is ordinarily quite safe to go to a former landlord, employer or neighbor. The testimony of neighbors, however, should always be taken cautiously; disagreements are frequent among tenants of the same house or the same yard, and it is an easy means of "getting even" to give a former antagonist a bad character. Any information of an unfavorable

nature, especially, should be taken tentatively and not believed without confirmation. It should never be forgotten that the purpose of an investigation is not to try to find out something bad about an applicant, but to learn his real character and situation as thoroughly as possible, in order that help, if needed, may be given as intelligently and effectively as possible. If the family are strangers in their present location, valuable results may often be obtained by writing to the charity organization society of their former abode, giving name and former address, and asking for their record while there.

After all, the principal sources of information must frequently be learned from the applicants themselves. It is entirely possible to say to them, either directly or in effect: "I see that you are having a hard time. I want to help you. But perhaps there is a better way out than you have thought of. You must let me ask you a great many questions, so that I may know all about the situation, and then we will talk it over together and see what ought to be done." When this basis has once been established, it will be found that the applicants are likely to answer all enquiries with a curious frankness, sometimes giving references who, when looked up, will contradict altogether the story told, and make known a very different state of affairs from that which the applicant wished to present.

There will be cases in which this method will fail, and the investigator will be deceived and tricked, but this also happens occasionally to those who pride themselves upon their subtle methods. Friendliness and frankness in questioning the applicant, and careful, conscientious work in looking up the references given will usually accomplish the desired result, while the straightforward-

ness of the means employed is no small recommendation. An investigator is not a detective, and can hardly be expected to adopt the methods of one.

Having thus acquired a working knowledge of the circumstances, character and record of the family one wishes to help, the next step is to form some plan for their permanent relief. It can not be too often repeated that incidental and haphazard help, given or withheld on the impulse of the moment, is both cruel and harmful. Cruel, because when so given or refused, there is no certainty that it will bear any relation to the intensity of the applicant's need. The refusal may come at a time when the want is more severe than at a previous time when aid was given freely; and this previous giving may have taught the applicant to rely upon similar help this time. Harmful, because it trains him to take the gambler's attitude toward life. If he knows that under given conditions he will receive a given amount of aid, he can make his plans accordingly, and the relief falls into place merely as one of the resources on which he may rely. But if an applicant for help may today meet with a bountiful response and next week be refused altogether, it is impossible for him to form and follow out any consistent plan. One of the commonest complaints made against the poor is that they are short-sighted and improvident, that they will not look ahead, but live up to the limit of their income, spending thoughtlessly when they have and then asking help for the hard times against which they ought to have provided. It is difficult to imagine anything better fitted to encourage this habit of mind than unsystematized giving. If the result of an appeal for aid may vary from what seems to the applicant a liberal provision to

nothing at all, the natural tendency is to anticipate the large return, and to make no preparation for the need which this, if secured, will relieve. Unnecessarily liberal giving cannot work a tithe of the harm done by irregular giving.

Another objection to giving without a definite plan is found in the impossibility of treating any case of want constructively without such a plan. If an applicant is in a situation which makes outside help imperative, it is pretty certain that he did not reach it suddenly and that he will not emerge from it immediately. There is some weakness or incapacity, some misfortune or lack of adaptation to his environment which is likely to produce this effect again, and to help him truly, aid should be given in such a way as to remove or overcome this, and should be continued until the danger of relapsing into want is over. There are families in which the earning capacity is really inadequate to their proper support, and who should have help extending perhaps over a period of years. An instance is the common case of a widow left with young children. If she devotes her whole time to earning their living she cannot give the children the care they need, and even neglecting them as she must, she is too often unable to make enough to maintain her own physical efficiency and give the children a chance to become well developed men and women. Too frequently in such cases help is given intermittently and without any far-sighted plan. The woman is encouraged to take all the work she can possibly get, and as soon as she is self-supporting she is left to her own devices. Then, from time to time, when she is ill or work is slack or some other difficulty arises, she must again ask for help. Generally each time she does this a new investigation is

made, and more or less insufficient and spasmodic aid is given her. As a result, she herself is apt to be worn out prematurely, the children are likely to suffer from insufficient nourishment, the help received is inadequate to the real needs of her position, and yet the family are forced through the painful process of applying for aid so often that if their self-respect is not permanently injured it must be of uncommonly strong fibre. Naturally there are many cases of want which do not require a plan extending over so long a period as in this instance, but there should always be some well defined end to be attained and some clearly understood means of attaining it, in accordance with which help is given or withheld.

In forming such a plan it is apparent that not only the situation of the sufferers must be taken into consideration, but also their characters and antecedents. A thrifty, industrious New England family who through some misfortune have fallen into temporary want would call for a very different plan of treatment from that needed for some of the thoroughly pauperized, shiftless and lazy families, of whom a few are usually to be found in every community. In a small place this difference is made almost as a matter of course, because those in want are sufficiently well known to those who give aid, for their character to be taken rather unconsciously as a determining factor in any discussion of what should be done. In a larger place, where applicants are usually strangers, there is a certain tendency on the part of givers of relief to class them all together as "the poor," and to treat them in accordance with fixed general rules. It must be remembered that the poor of our large cities are not homogeneous; they spring from different races, they

have different aptitudes, different standards of living, different ambitions and ideals. A motive which stirs one to the strongest exertion leaves another indifferent. It is useless to treat them as if they must all want the same thing and try to reach it by the same road. Effort which does not take account of their diversities is to a large degree wasted.

This difference runs from the most trivial to highly important matters. To take the mere question of giving food, it should be apparent that it is unwise and wasteful to send to an orthodox Jewish family the provisions which would be most welcome to an English or Irish applicant, yet certain societies have been known to persist in this course. "We can't make any differences," they say. "We send them good food and if they won't eat it that is their loss." So the unlucky Hebrew is confronted with the alternative of eating what to him is unclean food or going hungry, and as he usually chooses the latter course, the provisions might better not be sent at all.

When it comes to the more serious matters, such as trying to surround a boy or girl with helpful influences, or deciding whether an applicant is in need of severity or kindly encouragement, or, an easier matter, trying to find work adapted to his needs, the question of his racial and individual peculiarities becomes more important. One cannot deal successfully with the poor in wholesale fashion; the method which works admirably in one instance may fail miserably in the next. A careful study of each case in the light of all the knowledge acquired by previous experience and by such general information as one can gain, is the only way of acting intelligently and with any chance of success. If one is likely to deal

with people of any particular nationality some time ought to be given to a study of their racial characteristics, which can be gathered from books of travel and from history, if the opportunity does not present itself for a first hand study. Whatever aids one to understand an applicant's outlook on life qualifies one to deal with him more helpfully.

A little knowledge of the social ideals of a given class or a certain locality is also useful. One of the commonest complaints against the poor is that they are recklessly extravagant in the matter of funerals. It is assuredly trying to see a family put into burial expenses money which is so urgently needed for the living, but no good is done by deciding offhand that they are extravagant and wasteful, and lecturing them accordingly. They have their social standards, even more exacting than those of the well-to-do, and one of the most basic of these is respect for the dead, as exemplified in a fine funeral. One who refuses this tribute to his dead, offends almost unpardonably against their social code. It is a commonplace that most of us would rather commit a sin than a solecism, and the feeling is even stronger among the poor, where life is lived more in public than is the case among the better off, and where the bad opinion of one's neighbors is a serious thing to face. Of course, it is not meant that the philanthropic worker should encourage this form of spending; but there is a better chance of modifying it if allowance is made for the real feeling, not only of affection but of obligation toward the dead, which underlies it and the heavy social penalties which follow its non-observance, than if it is looked upon merely as a foolish and wicked waste of money to be condemned without reserve.

"The first real success I made sprang from helping in funeral extravagance," said one professional worker, during an interchange of confidences. "It was the beginning of my work, so I acted on impulse, but I might do the same thing designedly now. A child had died away from home in a hospital to which I had sent it, and I had to break the news to the family, and arrange for the return of the body. The parents were a drinking couple, and they were all shiftless and inconsequent, but I never saw more family affection than they all had. The day the little coffin arrived their grief was pitiful. They were planning to go in debt for much more of a funeral than they could afford, but as their credit was scanty, it was poor enough at that. They were so utterly miserable that I couldn't stand it; I felt I simply must do something, so I went off to a florist and got a lot of white flowers and ferns, and gave them to the eldest daughter, who was nearly blind from crying. I've never forgotten how her face changed, nor the tone in which she cried, 'Oh, mother, now Jimmie can have some flowers, after all.' I had worked hard before to help that family and make them look on me as a friend, but all I had done was a trifle compared with that little impulsive act. From then on they trusted me entirely, and really set themselves to working with me until, while they never became models, they did get fairly started uphill, and they are still going that way."

Another point on which a difference of ideals is likely to appear is the whole question of trades unionism, particularly with regard to taking the place of workers out on strike. Whatever our own ideas as to trades unionism may be, it is unwise to press any poor person to take work where a strike is in progress. The strike

breaker may be a hero or he may be a sneak, and among working classes he is generally looked upon as the latter. The self-respecting working man or woman will be very apt to prefer suffering to obtaining work under such conditions, and the philanthropist will only injure his own reputation among them by urging this action. It is only fair, too, to realize that underlying this refusal is a generous and commendable spirit, and that though its manifestation is sometimes unfortunate, the principle on which it is grounded, the sense of brotherhood and the unwillingness to profit at the cost of another, should be recognized and encouraged.

Other instances might be given, but these are sufficiently illustrative. No one wholly comprehends another, but the more nearly we can understand the life, the inherited attitudes, and the social and individual peculiarities of an applicant, the better our chance of forming a plan of action which shall eventually be helpful in the highest sense.

In forming any plan of relief care should be taken that it is adequate to the needs of the situation. It will often happen that the would-be helper will be quite unable to obtain the amount of assistance needed for satisfactory treatment of a case, but it is well, at least, to think out what would be the right thing to do if help were readily obtainable, and then to approximate this course of action as nearly as possible.

There is a curious idea among many that scientific giving means penurious giving, and that it is somehow far better for an applicant's character that help should be doled out in the smallest amounts which will keep him from utter destitution. This attitude leads sometimes to surprised reproaches against professional workers.

"Aren't you afraid you will pauperize them if you give so much?" is asked in all good faith by those who have caught the phraseology without the spirit of the new philanthropy. Such a question shows an utter failure to appreciate the true meaning of pauperization. An applicant may be pauperized by being helped irregularly and inconsistently, by being given aid at one time and refused it at another, by being trained to think that if he allows himself to get into sufficiently impressive destitution relief will surely be forthcoming, by receiving such insufficient help that he is obliged to ask in many quarters until he loses the self-respect which makes him shrink from seeking aid, by having relief given him without reference to his own ability to help himself, in short, by all the different forms of careless or indiscriminate giving; but it is highly doubtful whether anyone could be pauperized by help, however liberal, given in accordance with a definite and well considered plan, looking toward the restoration of the applicant to complete self-support, or such partial self-support as he may be capable of attaining.

This point can hardly be too strongly emphasized. "Inadequate help is torture and temptation." Torture because it leaves the applicant in prolonged suffering. Temptation, because it surely drives him to apply to others, from whom he is more likely to receive aid if he conceals the fact that he is already being partially helped. Both torture and temptation because it leaves him in a state of want which inevitably tends to lower his vitality and weaken his will and diminish his power of resistance to the incitements to intemperance and dishonesty. It may be impossible to give adequately, but at least such a course may be attempted, and the dis-

crepancy between what is needed and what is given made as small as possible. If the discrepancy must exist, let us recognize it for what it is, a misfortune for which our insufficient sources of help are responsible, and not try to blind ourselves by talking about the dangers of pauperization.

It may be thought we have already laid out a sufficiently wide field to be covered in forming our projected plan of relief, but there is still another aspect of the situation to be taken into account. No satisfactory plan can be formed without a careful consideration of the resources already existing within the family and within the circle of their immediate connections. Generally speaking every family has within itself some capacity for self-support. Some member or members are working or are able to work. It may be that they are unemployed but that work can be found for them, or that with a little trouble better paying work can be secured for them than they have found for themselves. If their earnings cannot be made sufficient, it may be that there are children away from home, or other relatives who, while not legally obliged to aid, will contribute to the family income if they are asked to do so. Wherever help can be secured in this way there is a double advantage. It relieves the charitable agencies of a charge which ought only to be incurred for those who cannot be otherwise helped, and still more important, it tends to strengthen the family ties which the conditions of modern life are doing much to weaken. Even if unable to supply material relief, relatives can often give valuable advice as to a desirable course of treatment, and consulting them increases their sense of responsibility. Generally speaking, every effort should be made to utilize to its

fullest the earning capacity of the immediate family before any appeal is made to distant relatives or to outsiders.

If the family is entirely unable to meet its own needs, even with the fullest utilization of its resources, the most natural source of aid is from those with whom it has established connections, its neighbors, its church, former employers or friends. The help which can be secured from neighbors varies in degree, but it is more likely to be in the form of friendly services than of direct relief. They may help to nurse the sick, or may relieve an overworked mother by taking care of the children, or sew for a woman whose time is too full to let her do it for herself, or help in countless ways a young girl left to be housekeeper and home maker for a brood of younger children, but they cannot often give continuous help in food or money. It is rather unwise to ask this, as it at once places the recipient on a footing of inequality which is never done by the acceptance of friendly services which may be returned in kind.

This objection hardly applies to the church, from which direct assistance may often be obtained, and an appeal should be made for its coöperation. If, however, the need is great, or is likely to be long continued, the church may not be able to undertake its relief single-handed. Then it becomes a question whether there are any local societies to make up the deficiencies. It may be taken as a general principle that the more closely related the source of relief is to the person or group in need, the better, and such related sources should always be tried before help is asked from strangers.

Any plan for relief, then, should be based on a knowledge of the real condition and real needs of the appli-

cant. It should take into account not only the relief of immediate want, but the prevention of future need, and the restoration of the family or individual to complete self-support, or, if this is not possible, to such measure of self-support as may be practicable. In planning for these latter purposes, all the resources of the family should be taken into account, and its peculiarities, whether racial or individual, duly considered and allowed for. If material aid is necessary it should be adequate in amount and obtained, as far as possible, from those on whom the family has some natural claim. More important usually than the material help is the careful planning to develop every resource within the family and make the most of every capacity. Above all, any plan, to be genuinely helpful, must be far-sighted and thorough, and must be consistently and patiently followed out.

PART II.—Application of Principles to Definite Cases

CHAPTER VII

THE HOMELESS MAN

"I hold not so narrow a conceit of this virtue as to conceive that to give Alms is onely to be Charitable, or think a piece of Liberality can comprehend the Total of Charity. . . . There are infirmities not onely of Body, but of Soul, and Fortunes, which do require the merciful hand of our abilities."—*Religio Medici.*

THE homeless man is the applicant with whom the average citizen most frequently comes in contact, and for whose existence, to a large degree, his own well meant but unwise benevolence is responsible. The pervasiveness of this type of applicant is doubly unfortunate, since he presents one of the most difficult problems of modern philanthropy, and it is almost impossible to deal with him helpfully except through a highly developed organization of charitable forces. The individual, striving single-handed to help him, can do little but harm, yet it is to the individual that he makes his plea, and it is the individual who, not recognizing the gravity of the situation, furnishes him the means of becoming more and more hopelessly a social wreck.

One side of our duty with regard to tramps has been laid before us with considerable fullness of late years. We have heard much of what we ought not to do, and have been warned of the perils of giving to them until we have no excuse for not at least knowing that such giving is looked upon with disfavor by those versed in

charitable work. Unfortunately, not so much has been said about what ought to be done, and many find themselves either giving with a sense of guilty weakness or refusing with a sense of extreme hard-heartedness. Without question the charitable experts are right in discouraging the giving of money in response to such appeals, but their reasons have not attained the same wide currency as their injunctions. In order, then, both to understand why it is unwise to give money, and what else and how we should give, let us consider for a moment the different classes which go to make up the huge army of the homeless. We may, for the present, leave the wandering woman out of the discussion, as she, happily, is of much rarer occurrence than her nomadic brother.

Homeless men may be roughly divided into four classes. First we have the laboring man who is honestly out of work and honestly trying to find it. Then the tramp proper, who, while often nominally looking for work, does so with much caution, who lives by beggary and petty theft, who is frequently below par physically or mentally, and who is so wedded to the tramping life as to make it practically certain that he will never leave it unless he is forced out. Next is the yeggman, or tramp of criminal propensities, who makes his tramp life an opportunity of gaining information which will be useful to him in the offences, generally either of burglary or robbery, which he contemplates, and who also finds in it a means of hiding from justice, and of eking out his living in the intervals of crime. And finally we have the tramping impostor, ranging from the man who does up his arm in splints and bandages, or simulates blindness or some other disability, to the well dressed

and gentlemanly victim of circumstances who has a plausible tale to account for the fact of his temporarily impecunious condition at a time when work or friends are awaiting him at some other place to which he hasn't got the fare. It is a question whether this last individual ought to be classed here, or with the professional begging letter writers and confidence men, but as he usually makes his appeal on the ground that he is without food or shelter and away from home, perhaps he may be properly grouped with the homeless man.

This does not pretend to be an exhaustive analysis. Innumerable subdivisions might be made within each class, and individuals are continually passing from one group to another. Moreover, temporarily allied with any of the groups, or vacillating between them, may be found those who are most of all in need of wise help—boys or young men who through fault, thoughtlessness or misfortune, find themselves adrift, who are attracted by the ease of entering upon a tramp's life, or by the adventure and variety the career offers, and whose whole future course may easily be affected by the results of their first appeals to strangers. These seem to be growing more numerous of late years. The detectives of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Road estimate that seventy-five per cent. of the tramps found riding on its trains are boys under twenty, "riding round just to have a look at the country." These tramps in embryo are so intermixed with the older wanderers that they have not received the attention they deserve, and we know but little of their numbers, the causes which lead them into the life, and the best methods of restraining or reclaiming them. Their existence should always be kept in mind as one of the strongest reasons against indulging

in the careless giving which makes easy their descent to trampdom. These several groups of homeless wanderers require a little detailed consideration before we are in a position to see what is the really helpful treatment which should be accorded them.

The working man really seeking work certainly does exist, though he is usually much in the minority. Every industrial disturbance is sure to send forth a number looking for the work which has failed them at home. During the strike in the cotton industry in Fall River which lasted through the summer and autumn of 1904, every cotton manufacturing city for a surprising distance around received almost daily groups of men seeking employment as weavers or spinners or in some other form of more or less skilled industry. The hard times of 1907-'8 caused a very perceptible increase in the number of wanderers. In the summer of 1908 Charities and The Commons collected from railroads throughout the United States their latest reports on railroad vagrancy. From every direction came reports of an increase in the number of vagrants:

"Most railroads report a very noticeable increase in vagrancy on their lines. They ascribe the increased number of vagrants to hard times, resulting in a reduction in the number of men employed throughout the country.

"The report is frequent that more honest 'out-of-works' are stealing rides and trespassing. President McCrea of the Pennsylvania reports that 'not many of the illegal train riders are vagrants, but men out of employment.' The Southern Pacific reports that 'the type of trespasser is as a whole better.'"[1]

[1] Charities and The Commons, January 23, 1909, "Concerning Vagrancy."

Even when there is no disturbance and in times of comparative industrial prosperity, there are large numbers who, being of inferior ability or poor physique, hold their work only by virtue of a pressing need for employees during a rush season, and who are thrown out of employment as soon as the pressure relaxes in the slightest degree. "The position of these workmen," says Rowntree, "is one of peculiar hopelessness. Their unfitness means low wages, low wages mean insufficient food, insufficient food means unfitness for labor, so that the vicious circle is complete." Sometimes such men stay on in their home city, trying, by turning from one industry to another, to secure a sufficient number of rush periods to make out their living, but sometimes they take to the road in the hope of finding more continuous employment elsewhere.

Also, under the stress and strain of modern industrial conditions, men are cast aside as too old at an age when they should be in their prime. It frequently happens that a man who is sufficiently skilful to be sure of steady employment during his best years finds himself at a pitifully early age relegated to the class of less desirable employees, who are taken on only when the need for help is great. It is hard for any man to believe that at forty-eight he is past good service, and as he finds his employment growing more and more intermittent in one place he is very likely to try his fortune elsewhere.

Naturally men of all these kinds are in much danger of becoming tramps. Whatever provision they may have made for their time of search—and usually it is meagre—is soon exhausted, and they must live by what they can obtain. The plea to be allowed to work for something to eat or for the privilege of a night's lodging

is made in all good faith at first, but there is a strong likelihood that it will become more and more perfunctory until it is omitted altogether, and the applicant finds that he has lost his original sense of shame in begging, and has gone far toward bridging the chasm which once separated him from the professional tramp.

Turning from the unemployed workingman to the tramp proper, a short consideration shows that the latter has so many variations that it is impossible to classify him offhand. Sometimes he is lazy and vicious, sometimes he is weak and inefficient, sometimes he is capable but erratic, sometimes he is a born nomad, attracted irresistibly by the adventure and variety of a life on the road. Caste exists within his ranks, and there are many grades between the "tomato-can hoboes," who are the lowest stratum of trampdom, and the tramp of reputation and ability, who prides himself upon his skill in levying tribute upon the world at large. According to the investigator who preferred to be known as Josiah Flynt, who had lived as a vagrant among vagrants, these higher grade tramps have no objection to work in itself, only it must be of the particular kind approved by their standards. Thus a self-respecting wanderer will beg for two hours or more, if necessary, to obtain the exact kind of dinner on which he has set his fancy, but would consider himself disgraced if he should pay for the dinner by doing the odd jobs which are usually offered as *quid pro quo*. The distinguishing feature of the whole genus is their determination to live as well as they can at the expense of society. Some will on occasion undertake a little work, but this is looked upon as a weakness. Generally speaking, they have found that they can make as good a living as they care for by begging,

and they see no reason for getting by work what they can get without it, with a spice of adventure and variety thrown in.

There is no way in which the yeggman, or criminal tramp, can be distinguished from his less dangerous brother by the casual observer. As a tramp he can pass from city to city unobserved, can throw off pursuit more easily than in any other way, and has an unequalled opportunity for gathering, without arousing suspicion, the information he needs. J. N. Tillard, Chief of Police of Altoona, describes the manner in which these criminals utilize the advantages of a tramp's life:

"I was initiated into the mysteries of yegg makeup methods when I saw a roommate in a Bowery lodging house remove from a normal hand what appeared to be the stump of an amputated wrist. It was made of muslin and paper, and admirably served the purpose for which it was intended, for several months later I saw the same gentleman industriously displaying his handless arm, and selling small cakes cut from bars of cheap laundry soap, for anywhere from five cents to a quarter as the crippled arm happened to move the sympathy of the guileless purchaser. A day or two after, I saw him seated on a tie-pile in friendly converse with a bunch of yeggs, one of whom I knew to be a 'peterman,' or safe-blower. As a matter of fact, these men were then planning the robbery of a small bank in a suburban town. They had rented an old house near the place, and furnished it with a second-hand cook stove, cooking utensils, dishes and bunks, and were biding their time till a large deposit for payment of railroad employees should be made. They were regarded by the people of the community as a harmless lot of vagrants and maintained themselves for several months by selling soap, shoestrings, pencils and by begging pure and simple. They were only partially successful in their attack upon the

bank, but got safely away, the local authorities never having suspected their character. . . .

"My experience has taught me that a large majority of the travelling beggars that swarm over the country only beg as a means to an end. They have reduced the business to a fine art. By appearing in the guise of genuine subjects of charity they 'keep the cover' necessary to plan a successful robbery, and secure the means of subsistence while their plans are being perfected."[1]

The horrible crimes of violence sometimes committed by tramps in lonely places are probably due in the main to this class. The yeggman is a thoroughly dangerous member of society, and public safety demands such a treatment of tramps as will make it possible to detect him and bring repressive measures to bear upon him.

The tramping impostor is of varying degrees of skill. Almost any kind of tramp may at times take up this rôle. Thus, after the great fire at Jacksonville a few years ago, the country was flooded with alleged sufferers, who having, according to their stories, lost everything there, were now trying to get to friends, who were scattered liberally throughout the Union, always at some distance from where the applicant happened to be. After the Spanish war for a time every tramp who was young and strong enough in appearance to give color to his story had, it seemed, been one of Roosevelt's Rough Riders, while the solitary survivor of the disaster at Martinique is said to have turned up, in destitution, in an astonishing number and variety of places.

Ordinarily, however, the tramp does not undertake these higher flights of fancy, contenting himself with very humble fictions. Perhaps the commonest form of all is the assertion that the applicant has work promised

[1] Charities and The Commons, Sept. 28, 1907.

for to-morrow or the next day, but has no means of getting through the intervening time. Another common form possibly owes its popularity to the fact that many members of this class are men who once held fairly good positions which they have lost through drink or dishonesty. Usually a man who goes through this experience wakes up to the fact that people really do not like to see anyone go down hill, and are glad to help if he shows a disposition to do better. Consequently, he presents himself in a somewhat shamefaced fashion, admits that he has "been on a tear," which has left him penniless, but claims that he can surely get his work back again if he can get to the town from which he started, or if he can get his tools out of pawn, or accomplish some other feat, which requires a little ready money. He has had his lesson, he says, and is going to keep straight now, but he can't make a start without this little amount of help. Such a story, to which the man's appearance gives an air of probability, appeals to many who would dismiss without attention a tale of lack of work or other undeserved hardship, and if it is at all skilfully told, is apt to bring in a good harvest.

It is a short step from stories like these to the elaborate attempts of the professional impostor, and the line between the two classes is hard to draw. For the purposes of this consideration, however, we may draw it arbitrarily, classing as professionals those who penetrate to house or office with their tale, and confining ourselves at present to the beggar who accosts one on the street with a plea for help.

When such an appeal is made, what should be the attitude of the kindly disposed citizen—the man or woman who is not a professional philanthropist, but who

feels some responsibility for the welfare of his fellows? It is apparent that the treatment required differs according to the past history of the applicant. He may be a boy who is just sinking into the ranks of trampdom, and whom every gift of money or food encourages in his downward course. He may be an honest man looking desperately for something to do. He may be a dangerous criminal or a confirmed impostor. In any case he represents a life which is either wrecked and wasted or in imminent danger of becoming so, and to give merely an alms with any idea of being really beneficent is as wise as to attempt to cure a consumptive by administering a cough lozenge.

The busy man or woman has neither the time nor the resources to deal helpfully with the vagrant. "The tramp is a specialist, and his treatment should be left to specialists." Nevertheless, this does not absolve the recipient of such an appeal from all duty toward the one who makes it. He is apt to do one of two things, either to bestow a small gift upon the applicant, or to refuse *in toto*. In the first case, he gives for the sake of securing his own peace of mind, but he should recognize that he secures this at the risk of injuring the beggar, of encouraging him to continue in a course from which he might be saved by more considerate treatment, and of increasing, so far as his action has any effect, the burden which the tramp problem inevitably casts upon the community at large. In the second case, he turns a deaf ear to an appeal which, while probably false in its terms, does indicate a most real and pressing need, and evades his part of the community burden which justice and humanity alike call upon him to assume.

For there is a third course open to him—a more

troublesome and less attractive course than either of the others, which nevertheless does not involve any great expenditure of either time or money, and which, if at all generally followed out, would reduce the tramp problem to a minimum. For the average citizen it consists merely in finding out what are the resources of his community for dealing with wanderers, learning how they may be called into play, and then making use of them whenever a homeless man applies to him.

Every community of any size makes some provision for the care of wanderers. The nearest to an ideal treatment yet devised is to have some place of detention to which all homeless men may be sent, in which work under healthful conditions will be furnished them, with sufficient food and satisfactory lodging, while their story is looked up and a sifting process carried on. The subsequent treatment should be varied according to circumstances. For those who are really in search of work, employment may frequently be obtained, or if this is impossible, they should be returned to their homes, where they may have relatives able to help, and where, at least, they have the claim on the public authorities which actual residence gives. If they have no such place of citizenship, a still stronger effort must be made to secure employment, or to transport them to some other place where work is promised. Especially if the applicant is young every effort should be made to return him to his home.

If, on the other hand, the applicant is a confirmed tramp, without relatives or a home, he should be set to work, under compulsion if need be. If he is an impostor, the alternative of work or imprisonment might be presented to him. If he is ill or injured, medical treatment

should be provided, and if he is crippled or otherwise incapacitated for earning a living at ordinary work, private charity should be called upon to establish him in some of the trades adapted to cripples, or, if this is impossible, to secure admission for him to some home. In short, every effort should be made to withdraw him from the life of the road and to restore him to the paths of normal living.

There is a growing feeling that the right treatment of the tramp demands the establishment of detention colonies, in which the wanderer may be held under observation until his needs are really understood, and also of work colonies to which those unable or unwilling to make their living outside may be committed for training, or for correctional treatment, as the case might demand. Colonies of this kind have been tried abroad, apparently with success, but the experiment has not yet been made under American conditions. The increasing seriousness of the problem of vagrancy is forcing attention to the need of some such comprehensive system, and it is probable that before long a beginning in this direction will be made.

In most cases it will be found that the municipality is not at present equipped to handle the problem with the thoroughness it demands. Ordinarily, however, there will be a municipal lodging house or some similar institution, wherein every homeless man may receive food and shelter for a limited time, usually being expected to do some work in return. Or either public or private effort will maintain a woodyard, in which an applicant will be permitted to work a given time, receiving payment in food or cash or other necessaries, as his circumstances may demand. Sometimes, especially if the place

is sustained by private contributions, work will be given only after thorough investigation or when someone promises to pay for the help received by the applicant. The commonest method of arranging this is for the management to issue tickets, entitling the holder to a given amount of work to be paid for in some specified way. Anyone who wishes to respond helpfully to the appeal of the homeless man may easily provide himself with these tickets, giving them in response to an appeal for alms with the assurance that the applicant will receive temporary help if he is willing to do anything more than beg for it.

If there is no public lodge or its equivalent, it is usually possible to carry out a modification of this last plan by buying tickets for some lodging house of a little better character than the ordinary cheap place, and giving these. Since it is always possible that such tickets may be sold or traded for liquor, it is well to have an understanding with the manager of the place selected that they are to be honored only on the date written across the face, and to date each one when giving it. This will not entirely prevent the possibility of their misuse, but it will at least diminish it. The Salvation Army frequently has lodging houses or industrial homes which may be thus used, and every city has missions which carry on lodging houses for homeless men in connection with their work. Missions, however, should be made use of with much caution. Some of them are managed by intelligent, conscientious and devoted men and women, and are doing good work, while others no less surely degrade and demoralize the applicant sent to them.

"Yes," complacently remarked the manager of one of this latter type, "when a man comes to me for help, I

pray with him, and if his heart is touched I encourage him by giving him something. I make him pray every time he wants something, too." And this particular manager never understood why his fellow religionists looked upon him with some doubt, and the organized societies of the place refused to send their homeless applicants to his mission. Ordinarily it is unwise to send men to missions which are not kept clean, which do not afford opportunities for a bath, which do not demand some equivalent, preferably in work, for their accommodations, and which force prayers and religious questioning upon their lodger, regardless of his wishes in the matter. Unless one is sure of the character of a mission it is better to make use of ordinary lodging houses; they will not be as helpful as a good mission may, but at least they will not train the lodger to make a profession of religious emotions for the sake of getting food and perhaps money thereby.

It must be admitted that merely sending a man to a lodging house, or to some place where he can do a limited amount of work in return for what he gets will not help him very effectively. It is better than giving him money, as he must at least, if he makes any use of his gift, receive food and lodging, while the money would be apt to go for liquor or some similar purpose. Beyond this temporary relief, however, it leaves the applicant where it found him. If the community is properly equipped for the care of wanderers, a man once referred to the right agency will be more constructively dealt with and placed in the way of regaining his proper standing. In the smaller and more backward places, the temporary relief is often as much as the citizen can hope to give, and it is only in such communi-

ties that he should resort to the devices mentioned in the preceding paragraphs.

Even in these places, if one has time and inclination to follow up a case, permanent help may be given. "I know positively," said one clergyman of wide experience, "that there is no truth in the saying that every homeless man is a fraud. Most of them are, I admit, but you never know when you will strike the exception. I remember one young fellow who came to me with a hard luck story. He was a foreigner, and had had a run of misfortune, he said. He had been in the hospital until he lost a good place, and on coming out couldn't get started. He had tramped from place to place looking for work till his money was gone and he had been begging his way. It had been over a year since he had been at work, and he looked as if he had become thoroughly used to the tramping life. He looked, too, as if he had done a good deal of drinking in his time, though he professed sobriety.

"It was a story I had heard a great many times before, but I did what I usually do—volunteered to pay his board at the Salvation Army lodge for a few days, if he would give me the address of his last employer and let me write to him. He hesitated about this a little, but finally agreed and gave me the address. I was a trifle surprised to get a reply. I had more than half supposed that about the time one was due my man would disappear, and I should hear nothing more of him. However, the former employer wrote kindly of him, saying he was a good worker, but so much addicted to drink that it had been found necessary to discharge him. If I thought there was any chance of his keeping sober, he could have his old place back.

"I laid the matter before him frankly and talked over the situation. He owned up to the drinking charge; said he had got in with bad companions when he first came over to this country, and had gone down hill. He promised to do his best to keep sober, and from his look and manner I judged he would keep his word. I gave him a ticket back to his old place, and a letter to a clergyman I knew there, asking that he would look after him a little and try to supply some other interests to take the place of the old dissipated companions, and I wondered a good deal, as he started off, whether I should ever hear of him again.

"I did. About three months later, I had a letter from the clergyman, thanking me for sending the young man to his church. He had become an active member, the clergyman said, and was exemplary in his conduct. Not long after I had a letter from the man himself, inclosing twenty dollars. He figured up that I had spent about ten dollars on him, first and last, which was a considerable overestimate, and he wanted both to return it and to put an equal amount in my hands for use in some similar case. I have heard of him at intervals since, and though that was four years ago, the reports are still good, so that for once, I feel convinced, an unknown applicant turned out a good risk."

Most of us are hardly in a position to follow up a case in this manner, but it is possible for every one to gain such a knowledge of the provisions made by his community for the care of tramps, or of the opportunities offered by missions and lodging houses, as will enable him to refer an applicant wisely. It will, of course, take some time and some trouble to do so, but this cannot be avoided. That is the initial gift which

we must make if we wish to be helpful to our wandering brothers. In any city possessing a charity organization society or any similar association, it is well to consult its agent, who can give a list of the city's possibilities in this line, together with details which will enable one to form some idea of the relative merits of the different places available.

Where such a society exists, the wisest plan for the citizen approached by a stranger with a plea for help is to send him directly to its office. If the society has not itself the means of providing for the applicant, it is sure to be in touch with the agencies which can and will do so, and it is in a position to follow up the matter more effectively than can the private citizen. This does not at all mean that the citizen cannot do much more than merely to refer the applicant and then dismiss him from his mind. If he is willing to give more time and attention to the matter, the society will welcome his coöperation, will report to him whatever is learned concerning the applicant and will take counsel with him as to the right thing to do when the facts are gathered.

Ordinarily the man to whom an appeal is made has two objections to following this course. In the first place, he is rather hazy as to where the charity organization office is and how an applicant should be referred there; and in the second he has a general idea that such societies indulge in a great deal of red tape, and that an applicant is left to suffer while they are going through the proper preliminaries to relief. This latter idea is industriously fostered by the applicant. "'Taint no use going there, boss; they don't do nothing but ask you a lot of questions and tell you to come back again." That or something like it will be the answer in at least half

the cases in which an experienced applicant is referred to such an office.

In regard to the first objection, as has already been said, some trouble is involved in looking up the society; that must be confessed—the only question is whether the end is not worth the effort. The trouble need not be great. The city directory will tell whether there is such a society, and if so where its offices are, and then a call at these, made whenever leisure permits, will place one in possession of the information needed to make use of the society's agency. On the whole it seems rather a small price to pay for the results attained.

The other objection is not so easily dispelled, as it usually requires a good deal of experience with charity organization work before a non-professional worker becomes wholly convinced that the plea is unfounded. It would, of course, be rash to say that no such societies have ever shown a fondness for red tape and unnecessary delays. It can, however, be confidently asserted that such a state of affairs is unusual to the last degree, and that ordinarily these societies subordinate everything else to the desire to be really and permanently helpful to the applicant. Their system of inter-society helpfulness makes it easy for them to obtain quick and accurate information, very difficult to secure otherwise, on which proper action may be based without delay.

"The value of the inter-society work came home to me strongly in the case of a boy of sixteen last winter," said one professional worker. "He had applied to a stranger on the streets of New York for help, telling some kind of hard luck tale. The stranger happened to be familiar with the work of the charity organization society, and instead of giving him anything, promptly

brought him to the office. At that time they had an efficient mendicancy squad in New York—it has since, unfortunately, been given up—and the boy, who was at first disposed to turn sulky and refuse information of any kind, found himself confronted with the alternative of telling the truth, or being arrested on a charge of begging. He chose the former. He had come from a little city a couple of hundred miles away, he said, where he had a sister at such an address, who would certainly send for him if she knew of his plight. He had run away from her home as a result of some little trouble, thinking it would be easy to get work in New York. On his first night there he had had his pocket picked, and the companions he had found in the cheap lodging house to which he had drifted had laughed at his plans of finding work. He couldn't get anything to do without friends, they assured him, and besides it would be easier and far more exciting to make a living by 'touching' strangers. So he had tried it, and was very much alarmed at the results.

"Promptly a telegram was sent to the agent of the society in his home city, who no less promptly called at the address given. The sister not only verified the boy's story, but gave references which proved that he had always borne a good character, and that his running away was a bit of boyish folly not likely to be repeated. She was more than willing to send for him, and his former employer was willing to give him his place again. A message was returned forthwith, and within less than thirty-six hours from the time the boy made his first essay in begging, he was on his way back to his home."

It is not always possible, of course, for the results

of a reference to a charitable society to be as prompt and pleasing as in this case, but ordinarily the fact that they are not so will not be due to any lack of energy or good will on the part of the society. Also, if the citizen really fears that a case will be neglected, he may easily prevent any such result by taking a personal interest in it. The probable effect of this course will be not only to make him more intelligently helpful to the next unknown applicant, but to convince him that the organized societies are doing their best, and that the charge of red tape brought against them is due either to ignorance or malice.

In communities so small that they have none of the agencies just discussed, the difficulties of dealing with wandering men are much increased. Ordinarily in such places it is impossible to deal with them in constructive fashion, and whether one gives or withholds help will depend upon how willing one is to secure a future good at the possible cost of temporary suffering. Men like Josiah Flynt, who have studied the subject at first hand, living among tramps and knowing the life of the road by personal experience, claim that the best and kindest thing is absolutely to refuse all help. With most of us, however, it is a difficult matter to refuse a man food when he may be really hungry, and when there is no other place where he is likely to obtain it. For those who have this sentiment probably the best plan is the old-fashioned one of keeping on hand some work demanding little skill or intelligence, and insisting on a fair amount of this being done as a condition precedent to giving food. News of such an attitude spreads very quickly among professional tramps, and it is pretty certain that within a short time a family which follows

this course persistently will receive applications only from those who are honestly looking for work. If any opportunity presents itself for giving the applicant employment beyond the limited amount needed to pay for his immediate relief, it is usually quite safe to offer it. No matter what a man's past record, it cannot hurt him to do honest work for fair wages, and the willingness to do it may mark the first step in his progress away from trampdom.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HOMELESS WOMAN

THE wandering woman presents a more serious problem than the wandering man only because we ordinarily feel a stronger sense of responsibility for a woman than for a man, and appreciate more keenly the gravity of her lapse from the normal standard. Fortunately she is rarely met with away from the large cities in which it is possible to secure the advantages of organized effort in dealing with her. In the main, the same course should be followed with her as with the homeless man, with some variations due to the attitude of society toward women. She is apt to belong to one of four classes. She may be the victim of misfortune or accident, or of her own wilfulness, which yet has nothing vicious about it; she may belong to the class of the inefficient and shiftless, who are always on the verge of homelessness; she may be technically a bad woman; she may be a professional impostor. Women of the latter class, though frequently homeless, rarely make appeals on the street, and may be more conveniently considered under the discussion of impostors which follows.

It is not often that a respectable woman finds herself really without shelter, but it occasionally happens. A girl looking for work goes to a strange city, expecting to stay with some acquaintance there, and finds on arrival that the acquaintance has moved, leaving no address. Or she goes to take work, and finds that the place promised her has been given to another, and that she is left without means either to return to her friends

or to secure shelter where she is. Sometimes, though very rarely, a self-supporting woman who has lost her work and run into debt for her rent, is turned adrift by her landlord. Sometimes a woman whose savings have been exhausted by illness finds herself discharged from a hospital with nowhere to go. However it may have come about, the situation of a respectable woman homeless on the streets at night is so distressing, so full of possible dangers and certain terrors and suffering, that common humanity requires us to fit ourselves to be of service should she appeal to us.

Even more full of danger, though not so beset with conscious terror, is the position of the wayward girl who has run away with a general idea of going on the stage, or without any idea at all, so far as can be found. She appears from time to time, but fortunately is very rare. Far too often her situation is discovered only by those more disposed to harm than help, and she does not come to the notice of the charitably inclined until she has entered another group.

Of far more frequent occurrence is the woman who is homeless through general inefficiency and shiftlessness. In every large city there is a class of women, widows or single, who live in a curious, drifting fashion, going about from place to place, and doing whatever they are capable of accomplishing, generally in return for board and lodging, with such cast-off clothes as they can get. They are too inefficient and untrained to take places as domestics in the ordinary household, so they live with neighbors but little better off than themselves, or "mind the children" for some woman who is occupied away from home. They may or may not drink on occasion—there is much in their

way of living to incline them to intemperance, and little to hold them back from it—and their past may not be above suspicion, but still they are not vicious women; they are merely depressing and discouraging, lacking in moral vertebrae and industrial training. Unless they have families willing to be responsible for them, they are liable at any time to be thrown out of their irregular employment, and to fail of finding any other refuge. The almshouse is apt to be their ultimate destination, but they go through a long course of vicissitudes, drifting about from place to place, before they make that haven.

The woman of openly bad character does not often appeal for help to those outside of her own class, but occasionally chance will bring one into contact with such a woman who really wishes to break away from her mode of life, or who may be persuaded to wish it. The task of reëstablishing her is delicate and difficult, and should not be attempted by beginners in philanthropic effort. They can render their best service by acquainting themselves with the rescue agencies to which they may send, or, better, take such a woman. Thereafter their friendly interest may be of both pleasure and benefit to her, but they should act only in consultation with some experienced worker.

It is obvious that women of these different classes need widely different treatment, and it is equally obvious that no one of them is adequately relieved by the gift of a small sum of money. What was said in connection with homeless men of the necessity for individual treatment, of the need for learning the real circumstances and adapting the course of action to these, applies even more strongly in the case of homeless women. Help

which is really helpful simply cannot be given offhand, and the only way of making oneself effective is by learning what are the resources of one's own place and being ready to call into play the established agencies.

A little investigation will usually show in every city or town some respectable place in which a wandering woman may obtain at least a night's lodging, and in most places this shelter will be continued until sufficient knowledge of the circumstances can be gained for intelligent action. It may be a city lodging-house or a ward in the charity building. It may be a shelter maintained by the Salvation Army. In some places the Young Women's Christian Association conducts a home, one part of which is set apart for transients who arrive unannounced and unattended. Where such a home is to be found it makes a particularly good refuge for the respectable woman left temporarily homeless by accident or misfortune. In most of the larger cities the Travellers Aid Associations maintain agents at the principal railroad stations for the special purpose of helping girls or women who find themselves accidentally left without the means of securing shelter, or in other need or danger. These agents can usually give the addresses of respectable houses to which, by becoming surety for the charges, one may send a woman whose appearance indicates that it would be a hardship for her to be obliged to go to a municipal lodging house or to a rescue home or shelter. For others it may be well to take advantage of the city's provision for the homeless. In any place which maintains a charity organization society or its equivalent, it is the wisest course to take the applicant directly there, or, if that is impossible, to give her its address, as the agent in charge

should know thoroughly the resources of the town, and be able to judge where the woman may find the care best suited to her needs.

In any case the lodging determined upon should be only a resting place until such facts can be learned as will make it possible to devise some adequate plan of action. The woman who is homeless through accident or misfortune or the deception of others should have the most careful help to return her to her friends or to establish her in independence. When once a place of shelter has been found, she usually presents rather a simple problem, and one which she herself can take the major part in solving. Sometimes all that is needed is a refuge till she can communicate with her friends at home. At others, it may be necessary to raise money to return her to the place whence she came, or to arrange for her board and lodging until she can find work where she is. Each case has to be decided on its own merits, but the woman's own judgment will often point out the right line of action.

Far more difficult is the case of the girl who has left her home intentionally. Sometimes she runs away with a girl companion to have a good time, regardless of the dangers she incurs. Sometimes she goes off by herself, fired by the wanderlust which we are more accustomed to look for in boys. And sometimes she is led off by a companion who deserts her among strangers. Unfortunately she is not apt to appeal for help, and so her situation remains unknown until she has suffered irretrievable harm. Sometimes, however, accident will make it known, and then it is plainly obligatory to interfere. If she can be persuaded to go to some Home or Shelter until her friends can be communicated with, the

matter becomes simple, but too often she will not listen to such a proposition. In that case, in any community where a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children exists, it is best to take counsel with its agents. If the girl is under a specified age, differing according to the state, such a society may have the legal right to hold her or to return her to her home. If there is no such society, the agent of the Associated Charities should be consulted, or, failing such an organization, the Chief of Police, who should know whether or not anything can be done to save the girl, even against her own will.

Cases of this kind, fortunately, occur but rarely. A more frequent problem, and a sufficiently difficult one, is presented by the shiftless and inefficient women whose own resources have failed, and who find themselves without a refuge. It is hard to accomplish much for these unless they can be kept under guidance for a time. In some localities Homes exist in which they may receive industrial training, proper nourishment and some stimulus to their ambition and pride, and under these conditions really wonderful transformations are sometimes accomplished.

"I think," said one professional worker, reflectively, "that Musidora Whitman was the most discouraging specimen I had ever come across when she drifted into my office late one November afternoon. She was forty-seven, and according to her story she had well-to-do relatives who wouldn't own the connection.

"She had been living with an acquaintance, helping round for her board, till the acquaintance's husband grew tired of the arrangement and put her out. She had no idea of what to do. She had been to the overseer of the poor and tried to get into the almshouse, but he

had said she was an able-bodied woman who ought to support herself, and refused to take her. Her hat had some limp and broken feathers on it, her dress was ragged and bedraggled, and her shoes were run down at the heel and flopped as she walked. She told her story in a dull, uninterested sort of way, and then sat there limply, waiting to see what I would do about it.

"For a while I was considerably puzzled myself over that question. It was easy to provide a place for her to stay for a day or two, but beyond that the prospect wasn't bright. It was quite true she had well-to-do relatives. She had one brother, quite a prominent business man in our place, taxed for twenty thousand dollars worth of real estate, and a sister nearly as well off. They wouldn't have anything to do with her though; said she had always been lazy and that when they gave her a home she was 'sassy,' and made trouble. I felt like making some myself over the calm way in which they ignored their sister's position, but of course she had no legal hold on them. I couldn't persuade or shame them into doing anything.

"Housework was out of the question. No one would have taken Musidora into a respectable kitchen, and shop or factory work was equally impracticable. Finally I went to the managers of a rescue home and laid the case before them. Musidora wasn't a woman of bad character, I told them, but they had room in their home, and were they going to force her to qualify herself for admission? There was no place for her elsewhere; wouldn't they overlook the fact of her technical respectability and try her?

"The managers were sensible, warm-hearted women, and they rose to the occasion. They strained the wording

of their constitution a little, but they decided that Musidora was, on the word of her relatives and by her own confession, lazy; that laziness was a grave moral defect; that their home existed for the purpose of helping women to overcome moral defects, and that therefore Musidora was eminently fit to enter. They took her in, and the last glimpse I had of Musidora she was trailing forlornly along, in the same dispirited, uninterested fashion, behind a brisk and cheerful matron who was bearing her off toward the bathroom.

"It was six or eight months before I saw her again, and then I couldn't believe it was the same woman. How that matron had done it I never could understand, but she had taught Musidora to work. She learned in rather a Chinese fashion at first, doing one thing over and over until she could do it just as her instructor did. She was slow about learning, too, and it was some time before the matron woke up to the fact that Musidora was the best cleaner she had in the house. I suppose Musidora had never before been best in anything, and it waked her up all along the line. When the matron began sending her out in response to requests for a good woman to clean, her pride was delightful to witness. Then she suddenly shocked the management by declaring that she had been long enough in the Home, and that she meant to leave. Of course they could not restrain her, but they watched her go with misgivings.

"The misgivings proved to be entirely unfounded. She secured a place for herself as domestic in a country place, where she was practically a member of the family, and where her ability in cleaning made her a valued assistant. While in the Home she had learned to make rugs, and as that was an unknown art in her new

locality, she found herself able to teach others, and to sell what she made in her leisure times. She throve under the new conditions, and all danger of her dropping back to the old ways now seems past. She has a bank account of her own, and is a respected member of the little community in which she appears to have taken root. She comes to see me once in a while, and she always serves as a reminder that no one, no matter how depressing her situation may be, is really in a hopeless condition."

For the woman who has gone wrong and who wishes to reform, special homes exist, and ordinarily by far the best plan is to get her into one of these. If she has relatives who wish to receive her, it is usually better for her to go to them, but generally speaking it will be found that she either has no near relatives, or that the family ties have been ignored for so long that it is impossible to reëstablish them. It is best however, to make the effort. If a rescue home must be resorted to, there are obvious advantages in choosing one at a distance from the scenes of her past life, when this can be done.

In communities so small that there are neither lodging places available for homeless women, nor organized societies to take the responsibility of their care, there is no satisfactory method of dealing with their need, except at the cost of far more trouble and expense than most persons feel able to give. Only by some such process as that just outlined of detention and sorting out, can they be adequately and permanently relieved. When this treatment is impossible many, perhaps most people, when approached by a homeless woman will prefer to give something in the hope that it may prove helpful

even though inadequate, rather than to turn away altogether. Some will feel that such a gift is so likely to be harmful that it is better to refuse. This is a question for each to settle for himself. The ideal way, of course, would be to take the applicant home, attend to her immediate wants, and write to the addresses she gives for fuller information, basing one's future action on the answers received, but the practical difficulties in the way of such a plan will prevent its being followed generally. Fortunately, as has been said before, the homeless woman seldom appears in small communities, while in the larger ones the organized agencies capable of giving her proper care exist, and it is possible without much trouble to learn what they are and how to call them into play.

It is apparent from all this why the professional philanthropist tries to discourage giving money to applicants on the street. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that the warning has been voiced in just the way it has, for obviously what he wishes is not to keep people from giving in response to such appeals, but to induce them to give far more than the dime or quarter or half dollar which may be handed over casually, with very little idea beyond that of salving one's conscience in the easiest way. Such alms can never under any circumstances meet the real needs of the situation, and so far as they have any effect, it is likely to be for ill.

Occasionally one hears a protest against giving to strangers, based on the almost certain waste of the money so given. This seems an entirely insufficient ground of objection. The money is really a trivial matter, and the reckless giver probably gets as much satisfaction from this method of dispensing it as from any

other. The real objection is to the inadequacy of the help so given under the best of circumstances, and its active harmfulness under any others. If we admit that our weaker brothers have any claim upon us at all we must also admit that their claim is for really helpful and beneficial treatment, which can be secured for them only through a rather elaborate organization of charitable forces. We need not limit our action to referring them to the agencies through which this organization can be made effective. We can do much that is helpful and kindly by following up the matter, and coöperating with these agencies. But in order to know how to help at all the first step is to make ourselves familiar with the resources of our own city and the means of utilizing these. There is more, much more, than this which we may well seek to accomplish, but less we cannot fairly do if we wish to respond to the appeal of the homeless.

CHAPTER IX

BEGGARS AND IMPOSTORS

"We can have just as many beggars as we are willing to pay for, and it is the supply of cash that determines the number."—*E. T. Devine.*

IT may to some seem illogical to make any distinction between the homeless men and women whom we have been considering and beggars, inasmuch as the former certainly beg. Nevertheless, for convenience's sake, it is well to treat them separately, putting aside for the present the homeless applicants who ask for food or a night's lodging, claiming that their need is mainly due to their present inability to find work, and treating under this second grouping those artists of the profession who bring to it a considerable degree of skill and intelligence, and whose profits are in many cases surprisingly large.

It is rather difficult to draw any plain line of demarcation between beggars and impostors, since the two classes so frequently overlap. A rough but convenient classification groups these mendicants who make a more serious plea for relief as professional impostors, professional beggars, and accidental beggars, the latter being men or women unused to begging who resort to it through stress of misfortune.

Perhaps the chief distinction to be made between the professional impostor and the professional beggar is that while the latter frankly seeks alms, usually displaying some deformity or incapacity as a reason for the appeal, the former disguises the fact of beggary by

an elaborate plea for a loan or for temporary assistance, which he pledges himself to return at some future date, presumably the Greek Kalends. Generally, too, the mere beggar is content to display his deformity in some public place, while the impostor penetrates home and office, selecting his victim with care and adapting his story to his hearer with singular effectiveness. The professional impostor, indeed, often displays talent of a high order. Knowledge of human nature, tact, quick perception, instinctive adaptation to another's mood or point of view, audacity, ingenuity, poise and self-possession—all these are absolutely necessary if he is to rise to the higher forms of imposition. The impostor matches his wits against society as a whole, and unquestionably many of them keenly enjoy the excitement of the game. Max Müller has an excellent statement of the position:

"Some of my beggar acquaintances were so clever and so well educated that they might easily have made a living for themselves; but, as one of them told me when I thought I had made him thoroughly ashamed of himself, they prefer begging to any other kind of occupation. 'Talk of shooting partridges or pheasants,' said he; 'talk of racing or gambling— there's no sport like begging. There must always be risk in sport, and the risk in begging is very great. You are fighting,' my half-penitent informant continued, 'against tremendous odds. You ring at the door, and you must first of all face a servant, who generally scrutinizes you with great suspicion and declines to take your name or your card unless you have a clean shirt and a decent pair of boots. Then, after you have been admitted to the presence, you have to watch every expression of your enemy, or your friend, as the case may be. You have to face the cleverest people in the world, and you know all the time that the slightest mistake in your looks or in the tone

of your voice may lead to ruin. You may be kicked out of the house, and if you meet with a high-minded and public-spirited gentleman, who doesn't mind trouble and expense, you may find yourself in the hands of the police for trying to obtain money under false pretences. No,' he concluded, 'I have known in my time what hunting and shooting and gambling are; but I assure you there's no sport like begging."[1]

In view of Müller's life-long trials with these professional begging impostors, it is interesting to notice that one of the impostors who has recently caused the most trouble to the New York Charity Organization Society carries on his operations under the pretext of having been "lately assistant to Prof. Max Müller, at Oxford."

The impostor of this kind may carry on his trade by writing or by personal interviews. If the latter is his chosen mode he is apt to select as his victims either clergymen or those who have a reputation for open-handed liberality. In either case he varies his story to suit the disposition and antecedents of those whom he approaches. If he addresses a clergyman, he displays a surprising knowledge of other clergymen of that denomination, or of the doctrines and organization and leading men of his church. If he applies to a layman, he is apt to show a similar familiarity with his family history, or to know all about some good but absent friend, whom he claims as a friend of his own, and on his acquaintance with whom he bases his appeal. There is no limit to the infinite variety of his story, but there is one permanent feature which appears through all its transformations—his temporary need of a loan, varying in amount according to the circumstances of his victim

[1] Auld Lang Syne, First Series.

and his confidence in his own ability to carry off the imposition successfully. It is impossible to estimate what proportion of the amount annually given in "charity" is carried off by people of this class, but at least it must be admitted that they give something in return, and the skill with which they concoct their stories extorts a certain admiration even from those on whom they impose.

The course of action in response to such appeals should be the same as in the case of homeless men and women. The community should maintain some place of temporary detention in which they may be cared for while a thorough enquiry is made into the truth of their story, and this should be followed either by such help as their situation demands, should their account of themselves prove true, or by legal punishment, should it be fictitious. Unwillingness on their part to accept shelter in such a refuge is in itself rather a strong indication of fraud.

Sometimes an applicant will present strong reasons why he cannot afford the loss of time involved in such a course; a friend is dying, or work is waiting for him which will be forfeited by delay, or there is some other pressing need for haste. Here again it is wise to make use of the associated charities, which usually have correspondents throughout the country. No matter where the applicant's dying friend or waiting work may be located, the agent can generally reach by telegraph or telephone some other agent who in a few hours will return an answer proving the truth or falsity of the story told.

Impostors of this kind not infrequently resort to writing begging letters—a form of beggary which

makes less strenuous demands upon its followers. All that is needed is a lively imagination, a supply of stationery, and perseverance; the free-handed kindliness of the public will do the rest. Middle-aged bachelors represent themselves as despairing fathers of children dying for lack of proper medical care; couples living in comfort on the proceeds of former letters describe themselves as destitute working people about to be turned into the street with their large brood of imaginary children, for overdue rent; men and women alike wax eloquent over the sufferings of the fictitious consort, for whose sake alone they overcome their own impulse to starve in tragic dignity, and force themselves to ask a loan; and with equal impartiality letter-writers of either sex represent themselves as youthful and devoted daughters, sacrificing their lives to the care of an invalid mother, for whom, notwithstanding, they are unable to secure the care she needs. Sometimes these letters are very clever productions; sometimes they are so clumsily constructed, so garnished with weak sentimentality and conventional religious phraseology, that the wonder is they are not thrown away half read. In any case, it seems hardly necessary to comment on the unwisdom of sending money in response to such appeals until the matter has been looked into by some competent investigator, and the story verified or disproved.

Ability of a different kind is displayed by the professional street beggar, who secures alms by some display of infirmity or exhibition of supposed suffering. The commonest method is that of the miserable man or woman who crouches over a wheezy hand organ, displaying somewhere a placard: "Pity the Blind." Some-

times the placards go into more detail, recounting the circumstances under which sight was lost, or metrically invoking a blessing upon the giver. In one southern city for several months a woman reaped rich harvests by displaying a sign which read: "Ladies and Gentlemen, please pity this poor Lady, who is suffering from Sunstroke and La Grippe. I have five children. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

If the beggar is crippled or paralytic, or knows how to simulate either misfortune, he may simply plant himself in a public place, letting his defect speak for itself, while an upturned hat or empty tin cup beside him suggests his plea. Or he may station himself on the street with a bunch of shoe-laces, or a package of pencils, which he nominally offers for sale. Nominally, for it is seldom that he uses his stock as anything but an excuse for presenting his need. "Of course," said one such street applicant, in a moment of confidence, "we don't expect that people are really going to buy our goods. It would be a pretty mean person, don't you think, who'd take pencils off a blind man? But if we don't have something the police may get after us for begging, so we have pencils or sticking plaster, or any other old thing, it doesn't matter what."

If, however, the cripple has a little more ambition and energy, he is apt to drag himself through the crowded cabins of ferries, or to appear on trains, or, in some towns, to go along the street handing out cards, frequently entitled "The Cripple's Appeal." These appeals are almost always in what passes for verse, and bear a strong resemblance to one another. The following is a favorite form:

"THOUGHT FOR ALL"

Stranger, look as I pass by,
As you are now so once was I;
As I am now, so you might be,
But I pray to God it shall never be.
For every cent you give, kind stranger,
I am sure you will be blest;
You will never miss it from your purse
When the cripple lies at rest.

Price.—Give what you can.

The comparison between the cripple and the person applied to is found in most of these productions. A favorite plan is to work in somewhere an apposite quotation from the Bible, as in the last line of the following sample:

GOOD LUCK TO THE PURCHASER OF THIS CARD

I once was happy the same as you,
But now I'm a cripple with nothing to do.
I'm compelled to ask strangers some assistance to give,
So please give me something—"Live and Let Live."
I pray God will reward you, my wants you will relieve,
And remember it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Please Give What You Wish.

From these comparatively simple methods the professional beggar goes on to the most elaborate deceptions. Sometimes he is able to feign epileptic seizures, or strange and appalling deformity and paralysis. Sometimes he neither has nor pretends to have any infirmity, but gets up a little scene to impress upon the spectator

his need. One of the most effective devices of this kind is that practiced by the "crust thrower." He is usually a man of respectable appearance, gotten up with a careful mixture of neatness and shabbiness. By preference he operates in a shopping district at an hour when the streets are fairly filled. He carries with him as his stock in trade a piece of stale bread, which, when he thinks he is near an impressionable subject, he contrives to throw unobserved into the street. A moment later he pounces upon it with a gesture of uncontrollable eagerness, and commences to devour it. He has not said a word, he has not, even by a look, begged for alms, but fancy the feelings of the comfortable and kind-hearted passer-by who suddenly sees a man, his whole appearance betraying pressing need, snatch a crust of bread from the street and hungrily swallow it. Naturally, returns are prompt.

It is quite impossible for the private citizen, acting alone, to deal satisfactorily with these street beggars. He has neither the time nor the resources to give the help that they require. His usual feeling is that he can give a little, and that if every one else would do the same, the applicant's need would be met. The trouble with this plan is, that granting the applicant to be honest and anxious to make the best of his situation, the help thus received in small and irregular sums is not enough to enable him to rise into any better condition. If he is helpable, he needs far more help than he is likely to obtain through unorganized giving, and the alms he receives merely keep him along from day to day in a degrading occupation. If, on the other hand, he is a fraudulent beggar, deliberately making use of a real infirmity or exploiting a pretended one in order to live

easily on the alms intended to relieve genuine distress—for an impostor by dint of an artistic presentation will secure large returns where an honest man will barely support himself—most people will agree that help given him is wasted. Indeed, it is far worse than wasted, for under a wiser and kinder treatment, he might be led or forced into a self-supporting, self-respecting life, whereas under his present conditions he is steadily going down hill, morally and often physically.

What, then, should be the attitude of the one to whom such an appeal is made? Plainly he should not give money. Neither should he refuse all help, if any really beneficial course can be substituted for this negative action. If his city supports a charity organization society, or any similar body, the really helpful course is to secure from the applicant his name and address, and to refer the matter to this society with an offer to contribute, if help is needed, whatever sum the giver can afford. If the applicant has no abode, he can be sent to the society in person. If the city maintains no such society, the best plan is to get the applicant's name and address, and ask the agent of some relief society to visit and try to discover the real situation. If for any reason neither of these courses is possible, it is better to refuse help.

More complicated is the case of the applicant who comes to one's door asking help on the plea of a dependent family suffering for lack of food, fuel or medical care. Very frequently this applicant, if a man, asks for work, or if a woman, offers for sale some trifle, usually avowedly of her own make. This offer disguises to her mind the fact of beggary, and she will insist, if called to account, that she is earning her living

honestly. This would be so if she offered her wares, and left the anticipated purchaser to accept or reject them on their own merits, but she usually has some tale of extreme distress which so works on the feelings of the household that the article, without regard to its possible utility, is purchased, generally at a price out of all proportion to its value.

The worst possible form of this kind of beggary is found when the woman carries with her a child, often a baby, going out by preference in the worst of weather, that the little one's situation may make her appeal irresistible. Under such circumstances no one has a right either to give, or, refusing to give, to let the woman go without an attempt to stop this abuse of the child. Children have a valid claim for protection, and if their own parents wrong them it is the imperative duty of anyone witnessing the wrong to take such steps as may be possible to stop it.

Whether or not, however, a child is involved, the only right way of dealing with such applicants is to secure the name and address with the purpose of having them visited and help obtained, if they are found to be really in need. It is not necessary to say or to imply that one doubts their story. It is sufficient to ask the address, saying one would like to send some one to call who may be able to help. The address thus obtained should be sent to the associated charities with a request for an investigation and report, or, if there is no such organization in the place, usually one of the relief societies will send some one to look into the matter. In places where the associated charities exist there need be no fear that this course will cause delay and conse-

quent suffering, as such a society is always prepared to act immediately in a case which is sent in as urgent.

Very frequently it will be found that the address given is a fictitious one, in which case no further action is possible. When the family can be found, however, it will probably be learned that there is need of far more extensive and prolonged help than the applicant would ever have dreamed of asking. If the applicant is normally a self-supporting, self-respecting workingman, he will resort to seeking aid from strangers only under the stress of extreme want, and he will be found in a condition which may be immediately alleviated, but cannot be immediately remedied. If, on the other hand, he seeks his living by preference in this way, his restoration to the ranks of the self-supporting offers one of the most difficult problems of philanthropy, calling for long, patient and most careful treatment.

In either case, there is no reason why the person referring the applicant for investigation should feel that his duty ends with this reference. If he is willing to give personal work, the agent of the associated charities will welcome his assistance; if he cannot give this, such material aid as he feels able to give will be administered carefully and effectively by the association. If all the money which is now given at the door or on the street to unknown applicants—money which is sometimes merely wasted, but which is more often actively harmful—were reserved by its givers for use in either their own or an agent's personal work, based on accurate knowledge of the needs of the person dealt with and having for its purpose his ultimate restoration to complete independence, the problem of securing sufficient aid for the poor would be well on its way to solution.

It will be seen that all these different classes, tramps, wandering men and women, impostors and beggars, though differing widely from one another, have one common characteristic. They all appeal for aid of one kind or another to persons who know nothing about them, and whose action, if they respond at once, must inevitably be taken very much at random. Each applicant may have a very real need of assistance, but the necessary preliminary to any genuine aid is to find out his actual situation and how he may be most effectively helped. This knowledge of the circumstances can usually be obtained only through the concurrent action of several agencies, while the formation and execution of an adequate plan of assistance may require not only the constructive skill of a trained worker, but a knowledge of all the sources of relief, both within and without that particular locality, which might fit this special case, and the time, the ability and the willingness to set these all in motion, to guide their action, and to be ready at any instant to modify them, cutting off, adding to, or changing the nature of their help, as the changing needs of the applicant may demand.

From all these considerations it is apparent why professional workers among the poor discourage giving money in response to appeals from strangers. It is not that the person appealed to gives too much; he gives unwisely, and defeats the very end his gift is meant to secure. The only way in which he can help unknown applicants is by learning how to bring them into touch with the organized charitable forces of his place, making his gifts through these, or doing his personal work in consultation with them. It is not likely that the casual passer-by to whom an appeal for help is made will

have the time, the means and the knowledge which will enable him to respond adequately; but it is entirely possible for him, foreseeing the likelihood of such appeals, to give a little time to finding out what are the resources of his own town or city for dealing with such applicants, and how he can bring them into touch with the proper agencies for giving aid.

Whoever possesses himself of this knowledge and then follows up the stories of the applicants whom he thus tries to help, will have many disappointments, but he will have encouragements also. Many, perhaps most, of his applicants will refuse the help offered, and if restrained from preying on the public, will take the first opportunity of escaping to some other community where they may carry on their predatory careers without interference. But he will find others who have longed vainly for just the opportunity which such treatment gives them, and who, receiving it, will rise permanently to a better condition. Miss Witherspoon, secretary of the Worcester Associated Charities, gives an instance which illustrates both the continuous assistance which may be necessary in some such cases, and the good results which may follow really helpful treatment:

"He was selling shoestrings," she says, "on the corner, a cripple with both feet gone, but his face attracted attention and interest. He gave his address readily and, when the secretary of the Associated Charities called, introduced his wife and child.

"The investigation revealed several things: first, that there was immediate need; second, that there were no natural resources from which aid could be obtained; third, that he must be helped to obtain other employment than the precarious peddling, which was practically but little better than begging; and fourth and best of all, it

was evident that in spite of the need, the family were not beggars.

"How each step toward reconstruction was taken would make too long a story. Briefly, it was something like this: a wheel-chair of which there was no further need was sold, and with the proceeds the rent of the damp, rear tenement in which they were living was paid. A visitor was interested who said, 'The man must have artificial feet, and a chance with other men. Moreover, I will collect the money.' Then the man said an astounding thing: 'Two good artificial feet will cost one hundred and fifty dollars. Give me thirty dollars, and I will make them myself, and have the tools to work with afterwards.' The money was given the man to try his experiment, and he succeeded. The first time he tried to walk on his new feet, he came straight to the office of the Associated Charities to see if the secretary would know him. While working on his feet, he had also been selling shoestrings, making enough to supply actual needs. Without any question he was making an honest attempt to carry on a legitimate business, and felt humiliated when money was given him outright. But once on his feet, there was never one day of going back to his old corner on his knees.

"Then began the struggle for self-support as a normal man in competition with other men. Work was obtained for him in a factory, and was bravely undertaken, but standing all day at a bench proved too hard. Discouraging days followed in which I fear there was not always enough to eat. The wife worked all she could, sewing, washing even, although a frail woman. But with a little help here and there, a loan occasionally, always repaid, charity sewing when regular sewing failed, aid a few times when absolutely necessary, and finally the difficulties were cleared away.

"Today the man is walking about like other men, without even a cane. He has his own little repair shop and a comfortable home. Better still, he and his wife

have made many personal friends who will stand by in an emergency."[1]

Comment on such a story seems hardly needed. A certain proportion of the people who passed by the crippled seller of shoestrings bought from him, probably telling him to keep the change. A certain other proportion thought to themselves that such beggars ought to be kept off the streets, and went their way. Another proportion really did not perceive him, merely accepting him as part of the street surroundings. One man brought him to the attention of the Associated Charities, where he found friends and resources to give him the chance he needed. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell by the way?

[1] Charities, Vol. XIV, p. 740.

CHAPTER X

CARE OF NEEDY FAMILIES IN THEIR HOMES: FIRST STEPS

ALTHOUGH the homeless man is the applicant most generally in evidence, the family is the unit with which would-be helpers are most likely to find themselves dealing. Work among families presents a task of difficulty, of responsibility, but also of opportunity and hopefulness. An untrained worker should never undertake it unaided if it is possible to secure expert advice. Here, as elsewhere, experience is of inestimable value in teaching what to do and what to leave undone, when to see and when to be blind, when to encourage and when to rebuke, when to give freely and when to withhold sternly. If a community maintains any organized central charitable body, it is always possible to obtain from its agents and officers expert counsel as to the treatment of different cases of need, and, if necessary, these agents will help the beginner to carry out the plans decided upon after consultation. If there is no such central body, the best plan is to find some worker of long experience in relief-giving, and to act in consultation with him. Such workers can usually be found by consulting the city directory for a list of the relief-giving societies, and then applying to the officers of these, also given in the directory, for advice.

At times, however, and in some places, it is impossible to consult anyone who has had the benefit of training and experience, yet the need for action arises. What is the untrained worker to do then? Certainly no one would advise turning away, refusing a possible oppor-

tunity of helpfulness because it carries with it an attendant possibility of harmfulness. What ought to be done for a given family will vary infinitely according to circumstances, but all action should be based on a few fundamental principles, and by bearing these in mind the danger of doing harm rather than good is reduced to a minimum.

First comes the question of investigation, which has already been treated in an earlier chapter. It is so important, however, that it needs re-emphasizing. It cannot be too often repeated that investigation does not mean going to an applicant's house, looking at the appearance it presents, and asking a few questions of the applicant, or the neighbors, or the landlord, or the corner grocer. Yet this is what inexperienced workers are apt to do, and thereafter to feel certain they understand the situation; "they have been to the house and made a personal investigation; what more could anyone do?" The old adage concerning the moral quality of appearances is nowhere more applicable than in work among the poor, and the harm done by this sort of investigation is occasionally so serious that it may be worth while to give an illustration at some length.

Mrs. Billings was a widow with two children, eleven and nine years old. She had a long and discreditable history. She was known to drink and there was considerable evidence of worse practices. She was a confirmed and skilful beggar, and had been helped and given up in turn by most of the leading charitable societies of her city, which fact may have had some connection with her downward course. The only good point about her was her affection for her children. It is true that this affection did not prevent her from training them in

deceit and beggary, but she took good care of them according to her ideas, and not only refused absolutely to consider giving them up, but kept herself within such limits that the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children had not sufficient ground for taking them forcibly. This love for her children interested a kindly woman who came into accidental contact with Mrs. Billings, and who, concluding that this was something on which to build, decided to make a vigorous effort to induce her to give up drinking, to become self-supporting, and to make a home which would give her children a fair start in life.

With this end in view, rather elaborate preparations were made. Mrs. Billings, who was at that time in even more need than usual, consented without much enthusiasm to take work if it could be found, and to try to build up a home. The friendly visitor and the agent of the chief society interested visited the representatives of the other societies working in that district, and obtained from them a promise that if they received an application for aid from Mrs. Billings, they would consult the friendly visitor before taking action. The churches and the overseer of the poor also promised this coöperation. Work was procured for Mrs. Billings, the children were started in school, and sufficient help given to make up the temporary deficiencies in the family income.

Then began a long and trying series of evasions on the part of Mrs. Billings. She was ill, or the children were ill, or the clock had stopped, or she had forgotten the hour at which to come, or for any one of a dozen other reasons she did not appear in time to do her work, yet put in unceasing pleas that additional help should be given her without the formality of finding out

whether she needed it or what she did with it. Finally, she formally refused to work, declaring she was too ill to do anything. A doctor was secured, who, after a careful examination, reported that nothing was the matter, but Mrs. Billings persisted that she could not and would not work. The visitor felt that the time for decisive action had come, and she explained to Mrs. Billings that work was waiting for her as soon as she would take it, but that unless she would take it, no help would be forthcoming. Further, if Mrs. Billings chose to go hungry herself rather than to work, no one could prevent her, but if she let the children suffer the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children would certainly interfere and place the little ones where they would not have to bear the penalty of their mother's shortcomings. Then the visitor retired and awaited results.

The first development was exactly what had been expected: every charitable society in the neighborhood received an urgent appeal for aid from Mrs. Billings, who, suppressing the fact of the help ready if she would consent to the conditions imposed, represented herself as ill, unable to work and suffering. The societies stood by their compact and did not help.

So far the plan had worked as expected, but here it suddenly failed. Mrs. Billings did not submit, neither did she starve. Her rooms lost their temporary appearance of cheerfulness, but she did not want for food, and there was no reason for claiming that the children were suffering, except from those moral lacks which society does not recognize as ground for action. Evidently, help was coming from somewhere, but where? The visitor was wholly unable either to learn or to make any further impression upon Mrs. Billings, and she found it

rather a relief when the latter suddenly flitted between two suns, leaving no trace of her whereabouts.

A few months afterward, visiting a friend in another part of the city, the visitor was told of some work the friend's church had been doing among the poor, and especially of one very pitiful case: two little children had come to Sunday School—such nice children, but very poorly dressed—and on visiting their home the ladies of the church had found their mother was a widow, too ill to work, and absolutely destitute. A little comparison of names and dates proved that the visitor's sudden suspicion was true, and she understood what had interfered with her plan for Mrs. Billings' benefit. The church had taken up the case as one of urgent distress, and without really understanding the situation, had given relief, not wisely, but in sufficient amounts to block the plan for the family's redemption. Had the church's help been adequate, it would have made little difference from what source it came, but unfortunately the good ladies who thus stepped in had not substituted any equivalent for the careful plan which they unwittingly ruined; they had merely given relief freely for a while, and then, when the children stopped coming to Sunday School, had neglected and lost sight of the family.

In this particular case the church people felt that they were acting with moderation and wisdom. They would have claimed that they had not given help on the spur of the moment, but had waited to investigate the situation. They had themselves been to the house and had seen the mother in bed and every evidence of want around. The trouble was that they were satisfied with this entirely insufficient examination into the circum-

stances. They made no effort to find out whether anyone else was interested, or might become so. They did not try to learn whether Mrs. Billings was merely in need of food and clothing, or whether her need went much deeper, and demanded patient, constructive treatment. They did not attempt anything beyond removing the outward symptoms of want, and in doing this they rendered nugatory a carefully thought out plan undertaken by one with the means, the interest and the perseverance to carry it through—a plan which might, but for their well-meant interference, have restored Mrs. Billings to a fairly self-respecting condition and secured for the children a reasonably good start in life.

It is not always or even often that an insufficient investigation results in such evident harm as this, but the damage, though less apparent, is frequently no less serious. It is impossible to emphasize too strongly the need for a careful and thorough enquiry into the circumstances of any given applicant before undertaking to help.

There is only one objection with even an appearance of validity which can be brought against this course, and that is the familiar argument that such an investigation requires time, and "people starve to death while you are finding out whether they ought to have help." The strength of this argument is more apparent than real. As a matter of fact the poor are seldom wholly destitute, nor absolutely dependent on strangers for the help necessary to save them from suffering. They are frequently under-nourished, but seldom starved. "In the last five years," says one professional worker, "I have been brought into contact with hundreds of cases of distress, and yet I could almost count on my fingers

those in which I found it really necessary to go out at once and get food or fuel. And in every one of those cases in which it was really necessary to do this, the sufferers were strangers in the place, who had neither friends nor acquaintances within reaching distance."

Most professional workers would admit having found a larger number than this in which immediate relief was required, but ordinarily the applicant does not wait until need is urgent before trying to secure some safeguard against it. When, however, a case is found in which this is not so, in which there is evident need of relief at once, the natural and proper course is to give such emergency help as may be required, pending further investigation. In the instance cited above, for example, no one could have criticized the church people had they provided Mrs. Billings with food and fuel sufficient to last for a week, and then during that week prosecuted their investigation and made themselves really familiar with the situation. The harm is done when the untrained worker takes it for granted that an investigation is finished when destitution has been seen, and concludes that the evident want which justifies giving emergency relief to cover the time demanded for a full investigation, equally justifies giving continuous relief without any effort to penetrate deeper into the causes which have led to this distress.

Grant, however, that a full and accurate investigation, or at least as careful a one as the conditions permit, has been made. The next steps in order are, first, to obtain relief for the immediate want, and second, to establish such friendly relations as will enable the worker to be of service in preventing the necessity for future appeals for

aid, or, in other words, in removing the underlying causes of the present difficulty.

In passing it may be said that there are two kinds of families which it is unwise for anyone but a trained worker to attempt to aid in their homes. If the investigation has shown that the family under consideration is actively vicious, if the home surroundings are absolutely immoral, and the training of the children is all in the wrong direction, the authorities should be called upon to break up the home and place the little ones in a better environment. Or if the family proves to be one of the almost hopelessly degenerate kind, with a long record of beggary and shiftlessness and perhaps intemperance and tramping, if no experienced workers are at hand to advise, it will usually be found best to refer the case to the public relief authorities, who will probably be already acquainted with the family characteristics. Neither kind of family is, of course, really hopeless, but both present extremely difficult problems, and untrained efforts for their benefit are apt to result in discouragement for the worker, and negative if not absolutely harmful effects upon the applicants.

Such cases are happily exceptional, and supposing that the family under consideration belongs to neither of these classes, the question next arises how to secure the aid needed. The investigation will have thrown some light on this. It may have shown that no material help is needed, but merely some intelligent planning or some utilization of available resources within or without the immediate circle of the applicant. If, however, help must be given, the investigation should also have shown whether this can be obtained from friends, relatives, the applicant's church, or some other source close at hand.

If there is no such natural channel of relief, there remain the public relief authorities, the large relief-giving societies, and the whole network of small charitable circles and associations. To which of these application should be made depends considerably upon the family itself.

One important principle in all work among the poor is to maintain their self-respect uninjured, to strengthen it when weak, and to restore it when lacking. Bearing this in mind it will usually be found inadvisable, in cases in which the family is unused to asking aid, to apply to the public relief authorities as distinguished from the private relief-giving societies. Rightly or wrongly a certain stigma is apt to rest on those who receive public assistance. Their neighbors look upon them as paupers, "town's poor," or at the best as discreditably poverty-stricken. Rather contradictorily, among the less respectable poor exists the feeling that public relief is a right which one may demand without shame, and the man or woman who loses the first shrinking from such an application and learns to go without hesitation to the public relief authorities, has taken a long step toward adopting the attitude of the confirmed applicant. Of course, if the family is accustomed to being helped from this source, the objection does not exist so strongly, and it then becomes a question whether the difficulty of getting help from other sources is so great as to outweigh the desirability of creating a reluctance to be on the public lists. The amount of help which can be secured from private societies and the conditions under which it is given will have much to do with the answer to this question.

If there is an able-bodied man or woman in the family

it is desirable that the help needed should be given in return for work. In most of the larger places it will be found that there are woodyards for men and workrooms for women, where unskilled workers may be given employment of varying length, for which they will be paid a fair price. Ordinarily one can purchase tickets entitling the holder to so many hours' work, and can give these tickets at discretion to the applicant for whom one wishes employment. If the giver is really interested in the family, it is well to learn whether these tickets are presented, and by whom. In one of our large cities a few years ago, it was found that certain applicants were doing a good business in work tickets. Their plan was to apply to everyone who was likely to have these tickets with a tale of a pressing need for work. By this method tickets were frequently secured which the recipient would sell at a discount to some more industrious acquaintance, whose need was so great that in return for a ticket entitling him to a dollar's worth of work, he would agree to surrender one-half of his anticipated wages.

In a community where woodyards and workrooms do not exist, it is frequently possible to make some work about one's own house, or to find friends and neighbors who are in need of someone to do washing or cleaning or odd jobs. When providing work in this manner, however, care should be taken that the work is really well done, and that the rate of payment is fair to both sides. Injury is sometimes done by over-paying casual workers through compassion. If the worker realizes that this is being done, the tendency is for him to look upon his employment as a mere pretext, which might as well be omitted, and which may certainly be slighted. If

he does not realize the over-payment, he is apt to gain an unduly high idea of his value as a worker, which will result badly for him when he is employed in competitive industry.

In some cases, however, it will be found impossible to secure enough work to relieve the pressing needs of the family, and in others it will be found that there is no member capable of undertaking such work. Relief, direct and undisguised, must then be sought. It is frequently difficult to secure adequate help. Sometimes it will be found that relief societies have a curious idea that there is some saving virtue in giving insufficiently. One professional worker tells of a leader of a church circle who called to ask advice concerning a family in whom the circle were interested. The circumstances were sufficiently distressing. There were seven children, all surprisingly young. There was a much occupied mother, and a grandmother too aged and infirm to be helpful. The father was an honest, steady man, whose health was weak, and who, on this account, was from time to time forced to stop work altogether. Such was the case at that particular time, and with a family numbering ten and no income, it must be admitted that the circle was justified in thinking the situation a difficult one.

"What have you been doing for them so far?" was naturally the agent's first question.

"Well," responded the leader, seriously, "you see, they are such a nice, respectable family we didn't want to pauperize them, so we have been sending a pint of milk a day for the baby."

This was an extreme case, but in a less degree the same thing is observable among many workers. Our relief societies too often allow entirely insufficient help.

Instead of adapting their aid to the individual case, giving what is needed as long as it is needed, they have some stated amount of relief doled out to all alike. "But if we gave more to one, we should have to refuse to help others altogether," is their usual answer to any remonstrance. It is now a pretty generally accepted principle that it is better to help a few adequately than to give scantily to many. The help thus given is likely to produce far better results, physically, morally and economically.

Private workers, however, must submit to the rules of the societies through which they obtain relief, and except in the fortunate cases where they are able themselves to make up any deficiencies, will often find it necessary to put up with far too little help for a given family. The difficulty can sometimes be overcome by inducing several societies to help at the same time, but the different societies will not always agree to this. Here as elsewhere, it is frequently necessary to do not the best thing, but the best thing one can, and to permit, reluctantly, the existence of a considerable divergence between one's ideal and one's practice. It is well, nevertheless, to keep the ideal in mind, and to refuse absolutely to feel that a certain family have "had enough done for them" because they have received a dollar order of groceries for a few weeks, or had half a ton of coal sent them monthly during the winter.

So far it has been taken for granted that the temporary help needed was only food and fuel. These are the most general wants, but they are frequently complicated with other needs. Illness is perhaps the most common. In every city and town the authorities make some provision for the sick poor, to which all are entitled who

cannot secure other care. It frequently happens, however, that the public physician, besides being a very busy man, is somewhat hardened by his daily contact with the lowest of the poor. If any private society furnishes medical care, or if any doctor is willing to take the case as an act of charity, the patient is likely to receive more personal attention. This does not apply to patients suffering from contagious disease, who ordinarily come under the care of the Board of Health, rather than of the Poor Department.

In many places a visiting nurse is maintained by private societies, who will call once or twice a day to care for an invalid. This often renders it possible to keep a patient at home rather than to send him to a hospital. Often it will be found that there are societies for the purpose of supplying invalids with nourishing food, for securing aid in nursing where a visiting nurse is not maintained, for furnishing fresh-air outings for convalescents, and so on. The means of caring for poor patients vary widely from place to place, and those who are undertaking relief work systematically should make some study of the special resources of their own city.

Another common form of want arises from unpaid rent. Again and again appeals for help are made on the ground that the rent is overdue and that the landlord is about to turn the family out. In view of the frequency of this form of distress, it is well to be fortified with some knowledge of the laws concerning evictions. In some states the tenant has few rights, in others the landlord is put to much expense and trouble to get rid of an undesirable renter. In some places it is practically impossible for a landlord to eject a tenant who is ill in bed. In most cases he will not care to do so if the

facts are laid before him. Ordinarily it may be taken for granted that landlords are reasonable beings, not anxious to distress their tenants unduly, and if an eviction at a given time will cause great hardship, it is well to go directly to the owner or agent and lay the situation before him; the chances are very good that he will grant a delay until the special cause of difficulty can be removed.

If an eviction proves inevitable, it is unwise for the visitor to undertake the task of finding another tenement for the family. Of course, emergencies may occur when the visitor simply must undertake the quest, but as a general rule, the man or woman of the family can attend to this better than an outsider can. Also, they can usually make better terms than a visitor can for conveying their goods. Here, as in other instances, unless the family are well known to the visitor, it is better not to give them the money, but to make the necessary payments one's self, if giving seems necessary. Let the applicant made the bargain, subject, of course, to the visitor's approval, and let the latter carry out its conditions. If it seems impossible or for any reason unwise to give the money needed for securing and moving into a new tenement, it will generally be found that some friend or connection will give the family shelter for a few days, thus allowing time to make sure of the real circumstances and to provide some means of effective relief.

Still another frequent trouble arises in connection with chattel mortgages. Again and again a self-respecting family, finding it necessary to secure money for some unusual expense caused perhaps by illness or by a period of slack work, and seeing no other way of raising it, resort to a loan company and give in exchange

for a loan a note secured by mortgage on their furniture. According to the character of the company making the loan this may be a perfectly legitimate business transaction, or it may be the cloak for outrageous imposition. Often the rates of interest charged are excessive. Five per cent. a month is common; ten per cent. monthly is not unusual; and even higher rates are charged. The interest is almost always compounded monthly, so that if for any reason the borrower is not able to pay it each month the face of his debt increases at an alarming rate. Probably there is not a professional worker among the poor but could tell instances of people who have secured loans in this way, and who, being unable to do more than meet the interest, in the course of a few years pay double or quadruple the amount they obtained and are yet liable for the whole sum originally borrowed. The mortgage is usually so drawn that the lender is authorized to seize the borrower's goods without formality of any kind if his interest is not promptly met, so that after having repaid far more than he ever got, the victim may yet be legally despoiled of all his household possessions without chance of redress.

When a case of imposition of this kind is discovered, it is desirable to consult a lawyer before attempting any plan of action. The laws concerning such mortgages vary from state to state. In some there is practically no limit to the interest which may be extorted, or to the indirect impositions in the way of charges for making out papers, etc. In others these matters are strictly regulated, and if the lender has overstepped the law his punishment may be easily secured. As a rule, however, he will have taken care to have the law on his side, and

his extortions, while unjustifiable, will be found strictly legal.

Under the best of circumstances, when the lender is fair as well as law-abiding in his dealings, such a mortgage is an expensive way of raising money. The lenders must make their loans in small amounts, involving elaborate bookkeeping, and often to people who have no intention of dealing honestly, so that losses are frequent. For these reasons, interest must be much larger than in ordinary business transactions. Whenever, therefore, a really honest and trustworthy family is found struggling under one of these encumbrances, it is advisable to strive to pay off the mortgage, lending the money for this purpose at a moderate rate. In cases where it is not advisable to do this, it may be possible to secure the transfer of the mortgage from a company charging extortionate interest to one having fairer rates. In some cases it may be desirable to give outright whatever is needed to clear off the mortgage. When this seems best, it is well to entrust the negotiations to some lawyer or business man, if his good offices can be secured. If the lender is inclined to be fair and reasonable he will often, if he has already received the full amount of his loan in interest, be willing to close the affair on the receipt of a portion of the face value of the note; if he has been charging extortionate rates and approaching as nearly as he dares to the limit of the laws, he may be willing to compromise rather than to let the case become conspicuous. In either case the appearance in the matter of some reliable and disinterested third party is likely to rouse his interest, and dispose him to make more liberal terms than he would be apt to offer the borrower.

Innumerable other forms of distress will offer themselves for assistance, but for them all the initial steps must be something the same: a careful investigation, followed by help sufficient to relieve the present want, which in turn should be accompanied and succeeded by a careful and faithful effort to restore the family to a condition of independence.

CHAPTER XI

CARE OF NEEDY FAMILIES IN THEIR HOMES: FINDING WORK

AFTER the immediate need of a family has been relieved comes the more difficult problem of securing such assistance as shall preclude the necessity for another application for help. If the family group contains a sufficient number of possible wage earners to support it comfortably, and the present distress is due to the fact that some of these are out of work, the natural thing is to secure employment for them. A worker with a trade at which he is fairly proficient can usually manage this himself, though sometimes it may be desirable for the visitor to try to interest some employer of that particular kind of labor. In cases where the worker has lost his place through intemperance or misconduct, if the visitor has reason to believe that he will do better in the future, another chance may often be secured for him by a personal interview with the last employer. If, however, the worker is one of the many inefficient or only half competent men who are found in every kind of occupation, it is apt to be impossible for him to get work at his trade during a dull season, and employment must be sought elsewhere.

It is probably an underestimate to say that in at least seven out of ten cases in which distress is due to lack of employment, the unemployed worker will be found to belong to the partially unfit class. He may be unfitted by laziness, by intemperance or by vicious habits,

but far more often it will be found that without any assignable fault on his part he is not quite up to the standard required for success in the field of competitive industry. He may be honest, sober and industrious, but a little dull mentally, or slow in mind or body. He may not have the physical strength to vie with some others of his trade. He may have been only half trained; he may be able only to act under constant direction, waiting helplessly for someone to tell him what to do if left to himself; he may be inefficient or incompetent; in a dozen different ways, none of them involving vice or wrong-doing, he may be an undesirable employee.

Men of this class constitute one of the sorest perplexities to philanthropic workers, and alas! often to their friends also. Every employer knows the type, and groans when some charitable visitor comes to beg that he will take such a man. "The late Colonel Waring was once asked what was the greatest official burden he had to bear. His reply was prompt and energetic: 'The philanthropists who want me to give jobs to men no one else will employ.'"

Nevertheless, it not infrequently happens that men who have thus proved themselves failures in one place, may be fairly successful in another, and in any case an effort must be made to get them work, and to help them keep it. In a few places free State Employment Bureaus are maintained, through which the needed work may be secured. Where these do not exist, there may be free bureaus supported by private philanthropy. The Young Men's Christian Association frequently has such an office in connection with its other work. At such bureaus, even if they are not successful in finding

the work wanted, they may give the visitor useful hints as to methods of procedure. Where no free employment bureau is maintained, it is well to make some study of the regular agencies. Frequently it is possible to arrange with one of these that applicants sent by the visitor shall be allowed to register and make use of the privileges of the agency without any charge, the visitor promising to become responsible for the payment of the fee in case a position is secured.

While making use of these means the visitor will find it well to enquire for possible openings among friends and acquaintances. If one has any personal acquaintance with employers of large numbers of workers, it is usually easy to find a chance for one more. In the larger establishments employing from five hundred to several thousand employees, there is a certain amount of change constantly going on, especially among the unskilled laborers. New men are taken on almost daily, of whom little is known, and whether or not a given man is taken may depend entirely upon whether anyone has brought him to the special attention of the employer. Of course, his ability to hold the place thus secured is another question, but a word in the right quarter will often give him the opportunity to prove himself.

One precaution is necessary in this matter. The visitor should be very sure that work for one man is not secured at the cost of the dismissal of another. To oblige a friend or a customer, an employer will sometimes discharge a perfectly satisfactory employee to give his place to another who has no claim but the urgent recommendation of someone philanthropically interested in him. The injustice and hardship of this are evident.

While the search for steady employment is going on, it may be possible to obtain irregular work for the man at some odd job trade. In most cities there are to be found distributing agencies, from which are sent out advertising matter and circulars of all sorts. These agencies employ groups of men to canvass the city, putting handbills under every door or in each letter box, or otherwise seeing that they reach the largest possible number. The work is heavy and usually ill paid; therefore no man keeps it longer than he can help, and vacancies in the working force are constantly occurring. In winter, ice-cutting affords opportunities for unoccupied laborers in most northern places. Nearly every city has some characteristic occupations, requiring little training or skill, so poorly paid that they cannot hold workers long at a time, but offering a temporary resource for those out of work. Here, as in other cases, the more one knows about one's own place, the more helpful one can be.

The whole matter of finding work is a difficult and unsatisfactory one. The conditions of modern industry demand a massing together of laborers for whom there is not sufficient continuous employment. Many of our large industries are seasonal, and those who follow them are necessarily out of work much of the time. Others have a season of feverish activity, in which every worker who can be procured is strained to the utmost, followed by a long dull period, when only the most capable and efficient employees are retained. In some of the textile industries the workers retained during the dull season are required to be in the mills as steadily as if they were fully employed, though they may receive less than half a day's work with a corresponding

diminution of income. They are paid only for what they do, but they are expected to be on hand ready to do it whenever it comes. These fluctuations of industry are not so disastrous in the better paid industries, as, for instance, the building trade, in which during the busy season the worker can lay by enough to carry him over the slack time, but among the great mass of unskilled laborers their effects are terribly serious. The visitor cannot hope to correct these ills; they present some of the most complex problems of our modern industrial system: all that can be done directly is to alleviate their effects in individual instances.

If the man of the family is unemployed, and work cannot be found for him, should it be sought for the woman? As a rule it will be. The difficulty of securing adequate relief is so great that ordinarily resort will be had to every means of diminishing the amount required. Nevertheless, it is a serious question whether, in families where there is an unemployed and able-bodied man, work ought to be given to the woman. Theoretically, when it is done the husband will be mortified at his inability to support his family, and will redouble his efforts to find employment for himself. Practically, it does not always work that way. Sometimes the man settles down contentedly to take his wife's place in the home, looking after the children, preparing the meals and keeping house, after a fashion, in her absence. Occasionally he develops a real domestic talent, and the rôles of the two partners are simply exchanged, she becoming the breadwinner and he the home-maker—a result of questionable desirability. More often, the man does not take kindly to household duties, and the wife has to assume a double burden, while the

husband's sense of responsibility for his family is steadily weakened.

This is no mere academic discussion, but a problem which is sure to present itself sooner or later to everyone who undertakes any practical charitable work. It is easier to find a limited amount of unskilled work for women than for men, so that frequently one of the first steps taken by the charitable helpers of a distressed family is to send the woman out of her home, and to teach the husband that if he cannot or does not provide for his children, his wife can and will. His failure to find work may be wholly involuntary, but it is dangerously probable that the edge will be taken off his desire to do so by the knowledge that his wife can supply his deficiencies. If he is disposed to be idle or intemperate or of a wandering disposition, the direct result of giving work to the woman is to encourage these tendencies and to hasten the time when he may become either a steady burden on his family or that *bête noir* of the modern charity worker, the deserting husband.

Sometimes this result has been achieved before the family comes under the visitor's notice, and the man is the chief factor in the problem. Such cases are discouraging, but not hopeless. The workers of the Boston Associated Charities tell of one such case, which responded to rather heroic treatment. Mr. B had always been an intermittent worker, prone to a mysterious ailment which assailed him whenever his wife was able to support the family. She was a hard worker and had often done it, but now there were six children, the youngest only four months old, and their maintenance was beyond her ability. As Mr. B's ailment continued in unabated force, the family naturally began to apply

to churches and relief societies. The agent of the Associated Charities was appealed to, and as usual sought to help the family back to self-support. This was not exactly what Mr. B, at least, wished for, and she soon had reason to suspect that help was being sought and received from other sources. After a conference with the others interested, it was decided that material relief should be refused altogether; assistance would be given in finding work, but if the man could not or would not support his family, he must lose them. Then began a time of almost as much trial to the agent and visitor as to the B's. "Notes came often to the office to say that the baby was starving, and the visitor's calls on the family were not cheered by their prophecies of being 'put on the streets.'" But all concerned held faithfully to their agreement not to give aid, and the parents were assured that if they were evicted, the Chardon Street Home would give indoor relief, so that they would not suffer. To be sure, this would mean that the father, at least, would lose the children, a fact which was fully explained to him. But if the visitor might not give food and fuel, she was permitted to help in finding work, which she did by advertising for washings for the woman. The results were surprising. Work came in till Mrs. B reported with pardonable pride that she had fifteen washings, and, in her own phrase, was "making a Chinaman of Mr. B," who, if he could not go out and get a job, could certainly help in her work. Under these circumstances, Mr. B appears to have concluded that he might as well yield to the inevitable with a good grace, and work, if work he really must, at something better suited to the occidental male than washing. "The final result is that the man has been working for

$10.00 a week for three months; the family has moved to a good tenement, owned by his employer, and this fact, added to the scare he has had about losing his family, makes it hopeful that the job may be permanent."

It is not always that a man who has become accustomed to look upon his wife as the wage-earner of the family, can be reached by such treatment; sometimes its only effect would be to drive him away, leaving the family to get on as best it may without him. This at least eliminates the question of his support, so that the experiment is worth trying; but plainly it is desirable to avoid whatever may reduce the husband to this condition of willing dependence, and to treat him, from the first, as the natural wage-earner, whose place cannot be filled, even temporarily, by the wife.

Professor Patten has recently opposed with much vigor the idea that women at marriage should cease to be wage-earners. His position is, in the main, that when a married woman has a real ability in some direction, and has no special taste for household work, it is better for all concerned that she should follow out her inclination, using her earnings in whole or in part to employ for her household duties someone whose special ability lies along that line. There is force in his contention, but it does not apply to the cases which usually come under the charitable visitor's notice. In these there is generally no question of indulging a strong taste. The question is whether the man shall continue to be the wage-earner, bringing home his wages for his wife to administer, or whether the wife shall be forced to assume the double burden of breadwinner and home-maker, with the inevitable results of a neglected home, an insuffi-

cient income, and, usually, an overworked and prematurely broken-down woman. When the question is reduced to these terms few will be found to hesitate over the answer.

Here, as in the matter of securing adequate relief, we shall often find a gap between our theory and our practice. Nevertheless, it is always well to keep the ideal line of action in mind, and most experienced workers agree that this ideal demands that when a family includes an able-bodied, unemployed man, work should be found for him, not for his wife. If the difficulties of finding employment for him are so great that the visitor feels it necessary to secure something for the wife to do, it should be recognized that this course is fraught with possibilities of danger to the future welfare of the family, and it should be followed with all attainable care and precaution.

In this connection the question of making work often arises. If real work cannot be found, is it wise to set an able-bodied man or woman to some task invented for the sole purpose of giving them something to do that the help they need may come under the guise of wages rather than of alms? In the old days it was often felt strongly that work should be exacted, though this seems to have been advocated rather as a test, or, in some instances, apparently more with the deliberate intention of making the conditions of aid as unpleasant as possible, than for the sake of fostering the applicant's self-respect. In some of the smaller communities the work demanded was often conspicuously humiliating. A log of wood was to be carried from one village to another and back again; a certain number of bricks must be piled in one place today, and tomorrow taken down and

piled in another; and so on, through a series of employments manifestly artificial and useless.

Naturally, when a broader conception of charity arose, it came to be felt that such practices were worse than useless, and a certain revulsion against any kind of "made" work was experienced. At present, the use or non-use of this form of assistance is largely determined by local conditions. The arguments in its favor are the desirability of having something in the nature of a work test to offer applicants, the possible educational value of the work required, and the conservation of the applicant's self-respect and the avoidance of any danger of fostering habits of dependence. The force of these arguments is apparent without discussion. The opponents of such work base their objections upon the danger of its interference with economic conditions, and the abuses to which the system is liable.

Perhaps both these objections may best be considered in connection with some definite form of made work. Take, for instance, the form in which it most often appears—sewing for women. Churches and relief societies, finding themselves unable to establish workrooms in which every grade of labor may be utilized, try to meet the needs of poor and untrained women by furnishing them sewing for which no demand exists. The women are paid for their work, but what shall be done with their product? Sometimes the articles made are given to the maker, or they are sold to her at a low price, and her labor is taken in payment. Sometimes they are given to hospitals or other benevolent institutions. Sometimes they are offered for sale, and people are urged to buy for the sake of helping the work along. Obviously, if they are offered below the regular market

price, there will be danger of injuring other workers whose wages are not made up from charitable contributions. Regular dealers in such articles must put down their prices to meet those of the charitable association or lose their custom; in order to do this they must cut the wages of their employees; and so the made work becomes a direct and effective lever for lowering wages and reducing other workers to the need of charity. There is no question that serious harm has sometimes been done in this way. The harm, however, does not seem at all a necessary accompaniment of the system. If the managers offer their product at fair market prices the regular dealer is not interfered with, except in the way of legitimate competition, and there is no tendency to lower wages. So it is with every form of made work. If carelessly handled it may be a source of injury to all self-supporting workers in that line, but with the exercise of prudence and business fairness, there is no reason why it should work harm, and many why it should help.

The second objection is due mainly to the lack of any standard of excellence to which the work done must necessarily conform. When articles are to be sold in the open market they must come up to a certain standard or purchasers will refuse them, and the knowledge of this acts as a stimulus to employer and employee alike. When, however, an enterprise is independent of the market value of its products, when it is supported mainly by contributions which will continue even though it never sells a pennyworth of its product, there is a constant temptation to the managers to relax their demands and rest satisfied with inferior work. The workers are quick to perceive this and in their turn become careless and indifferent; they see that the work is a sham, and

that there is no connection between their efforts and their returns. It is only natural if, under such circumstances, they do not try to do well, and thus the occupation which should train them for work elsewhere really makes them far less fit for outside employment than they were before. Of course, untrained workers cannot be expected to produce good results, but the managers who accept from them careless and slighted work are doing all in their power to harm them. Workers who are too untrained or too unintelligent to do ordinary tasks should be given something simple enough to meet their capacity, and their payment should be based on the pains taken, not on the mere fact of getting through an allotted amount or spending a certain period over the work. If these two precautions are observed, not to undersell the regular market, and not to allow workers to do their tasks carelessly or negligently, there seems no reason why made work should not be as useful to the employee as genuine work. It involves considerably more trouble to the one who furnishes it, but its effect on the worker is so much better than the mere giving of alms that the trouble is worth while.

So far we have considered only the parents as possible breadwinners. If, however, the family includes any children who are near working age, the visitor will probably be entreated to get work for them. Within a comparatively short time this would have been done as a matter of course, but fortunately the public attitude toward child labor is changing, and it is no longer taken for granted that failure or inability on the parents' part to support the family necessarily involves putting the children to work. Whether or not it is wise to try to

secure employment for a given child must depend on such circumstances as the age and development, physical and mental, of the child, the cause of the family's poverty, the kind of work which can be secured, and a number of similar considerations.

It may be accepted as a general principle, practically without exception, that a charitable worker should not ask for any child an exemption from the laws governing child labor in that state. It may be well to set up a higher than the legal standard, but a lower one should never be accepted. Every step forward in the effort to protect children has been gained at exceeding cost. The forces anxious to exploit childhood are alert to detect any weakening of the barriers raised against them. No matter how great the hardship entailed in a given case by refusing to a child below the legal age permission to work, the good of childhood as a whole demands that the law should be preserved inviolate. The temptation to connive at its evasion, or to secure an exemption in states where this may be done, is very great at times, but no one has a right to take such action in the name of charity. Philanthropists have rather a bad name in regard to this matter. They appreciate so keenly the need of the family, they realize so fully the difficulty of securing sufficient continuous aid, that they are apt to lose sight of the principle involved. "Not a week passes," observed one employer, indignantly, "but some charitable woman comes begging me to take some child under age because its family needs its earnings so badly. Then hearings on child labor are held, and I go there and listen to denunciations of the employers' greed which leads to the exploitation of the labor of children."

Frequently the question comes up of securing em-

ployment for children outside of school hours. This may be an admirable or a particularly objectionable plan, according to circumstances. It may mean nothing more than a reëstablishment of the old family conditions which still prevail in rural districts, where each child had his share of work, useful and educational, to perform in addition to attending school, or it may mean an undue strain on the child with a long train of resultant evils. In each case it must be decided on its merits. Few people would approve of sending a child who has been in school all day into the mills or factories, to remain there until eight or nine in the evening. A course less apparently objectionable, but which may lead to even more serious results, is to start the children after school hours into some street trade, such as selling papers or blacking shoes or peddling matches or other small articles. There is strong evidence to show that the children suffer physically and morally from these street trades, that their financial returns are small, that the training and environment are damaging, and that the results of such employment are evil for the community and the children alike.

Other kinds of occupation may be less objectionable, or even desirable. There is no reason why the child's activities should not be turned into useful channels, if proper precautions are observed. The trouble is that ordinarily such precautions are wholly neglected, and the immediate need is allowed to outweigh the consideration of the child's future. Three points should always be borne in mind. First, a child should never be put to work which is injurious morally, either in its own nature, or in the conditions and environment under which it must be carried on. This needs no discussion,

yet unfortunately it is by no means generally adopted. Second, it should not be permitted to take work which is physically harmful. On this point we have as yet far too little information. Some occupations, of course, are known to be dangerous to old and young alike, but setting these aside, we know but little about the effect of different kinds of work on a growing child. Studies of this subject are under way at present, but it will be some time before their results are available. Meanwhile, common sense indicates plainly enough that some employments are entirely unsuitable for children. Night work is a severe strain for an adult, and for a child it should be absolutely out of the question. The dust-laden air of the coal breakers and the fierce heat of the glass factories are so plainly opposed to healthful development that it is a wonder children were ever allowed to enter such industries. There are other occupations in which conditions may be good or bad, according to the attitude of the owners or managers. In every case, if conditions are not known, some enquiry should be made before a child is encouraged or permitted to take up a given form of work. During childhood and adolescence it is easy to work irreparable harm, and a few dollars added to a family's income at the present time may be paid for later on by stunted physique and weakened vitality, if not by actual defect or infirmity.

The third principle is perhaps less obvious than the two just mentioned, yet it is fully as important. Any work to which a child is put should have some value as training, and should lead to something. When a child leaves school he—and even more frequently, she—is apt to take up the first thing which offers itself. This is frequently an unskilled occupation, in which, after a few

weeks' experience, the child can make all he will ever be able to earn in it. For some of these occupations, he will presently become too old; in others, he will presently find the wage wholly insufficient or conditions intolerable. In either case, he is again just where he was when he first left school, so far as industrial training and efficiency are concerned, except that he is older and has lost the first zest of feeling himself a wage earner. There has been nothing in what he has done to qualify him for doing anything else. He is adrift on the industrial sea, and it is dangerously probable that he will remain so. In some states, the public schools are trying to provide some industrial training which will fit the child to enter, when he leaves school, some industry in which he can pass from one grade to another, becoming at last a skilled worker, sure of good wages and reasonably steady employment. In other places, outside agencies provide some training of this kind, but far too often there is no chance for such training except for those who can afford to enter special schools, or who can become apprentices. It is usually possible, however, for a visitor, by giving some thought and trouble to the matter, to find a place in which the child, entering at low wages, may at least learn something which will enable him later on to get into better work. The child cannot be expected to take long views; the parents, in some cases, are blinded by their immediate necessities; but the visitor can and should look to the future, and bend his energies to seeing that the present independence of the family is not secured at the cost of the child's permanent welfare. Better a recourse to public or private charity than that. When, however, suitable work can be secured, the child and family alike

are helped; and it may well be that the training the latter receives is worth more to it than its wage is to its family. The visitor who succeeds in starting a child in some form of employment really adapted to it, instead of letting it be thrust into the first place which can be found, may well feel that he has achieved a real and lasting good.

CHAPTER XII

CARE OF NEEDY FAMILIES: INTEMPERANCE

Up to this point it has been taken for granted that the want with which the visitor has to deal has arisen either from misfortune or from lack of work, due, perhaps, to inefficiency, but not to direct fault on the part of the workers of the distressed family. It is rather the exception, however, when a case of poverty can be thus simply classed. Ordinarily there are a number of contributory causes, and it will tax the visitor's skill and judgment to decide which is the principal and which the subsidiary. The two causes, involving a moral lapse, which are most likely to be noticed, are intemperance and desertion on the part of the natural breadwinner.

It does not necessarily follow that these causes are the most frequent, but they are the most obvious. Other causes of an equally discreditable nature may be at work for a long time before their results can clearly be traced back to them, or it may never be possible to establish the connection. Dr. Warner, for instance, thinks that a large part of the poverty of the country is due to licentiousness, which unfits the laborer for his work, making him an undesirable employee, and thus leading to his irregular employment. It is plainly impossible for the average visitor to probe such a cause, and even were it as widespread and disastrous in its effects as Warner deems it, for the most part it would remain unknown. Again, dishonesty may be a determining factor of poverty to a much greater extent than is

apparent. Occasionally a man is found guilty of theft or some similar crime, and sent to jail, leaving his family in want. More often, he will not commit an overt act which his employers think worth following up, but a suspicion that he is not "quite straight" will attach itself to him, keeping him out of the better shops, confining him to the least desirable associates, and indirectly bringing him lower and lower. This indirect influence might be at work for a long while before it became apparent to an outsider.

Intemperance and desertion, on the other hand, are apparent and conspicuous causes. Both are rapid and direct in their effects, and generally speaking neither can be hidden for long. Of the two, intemperance is by far the more common, though desertion, which is often coupled with it, appears to be growing more frequent every year. The two are so frequently met with that it will be worth while to consider each at some length.

In dealing with any specific case of intemperance it is important to decide whether it is a cause or an effect of the poverty of the family. "Poverty produces drunkenness quite as often as drunkenness produces poverty." Many men drink, not from any inherent viciousness or even from any particular love of liquor, but simply because they are under-nourished and overworked, and their whole system craves a stimulant. Students who, for the sake of observing tramp life at close quarters, have disguised themselves as homeless men and shared their experiences, are unanimous in declaring that after a night spent in one of the ill ventilated, overcrowded lodging houses, there is a strong demand for some stimulant to nullify temporarily the

effect of the close air and evil odors. The average laborer's home is better than these lodgings, but it is often badly ventilated, and the sleeping rooms are far too crowded. In the shop or factory, again, the workman meets with poor ventilation and the air is heavy with the odors of oil and material, or perhaps heated to the point of exhaustion. In many instances the mere lack of good air except for limited periods, is sufficient to produce a depressed physical condition, which calls loudly for a stimulant of any kind. When to this is added the effect of the rather general bad cooking of the tenements, with its attendant malnutrition, it is easy to understand that in many cases the bodily condition of the laborer is largely responsible for his intemperance.

In other instances men drink mainly because of the intolerable narrowness and monotony of their lives, from which intoxication offers a temporary refuge. This is particularly apt to be the case with workers whose task requires close attention but no mental effort. They are, perhaps, not particularly intelligent to begin with, their work involves considerable nervous strain, and when the day's toil is ended physical weariness and mental exhaustion alike shut them out from the commoner forms of relaxation. They need something which will make an appeal at once simple and strong, and this they find in liquor. Still others drink accidentally, as it were, because the saloon is the only place of amusement open to them, except the cheap theatre, and if they make use of its social opportunities they must, in common self-respect, pay something in one form or another. Others are periodic drinkers, who for months at a time are models of industry and steadiness, but who are

suddenly seized with a craving for liquor which apparently must be satisfied at any cost.

Men belonging to any of these classes may be, on the whole, fair members of society; their over-indulgence may cause only temporary absences from work, and they may provide well for their families. Often, however, this is not the case, and, under the best of circumstances, there is always the danger that the drinking may lose its occasional character and become more and more frequent, until the power to work and the ability to get work have alike disappeared.

In all such cases of intemperance, common sense indicates that the best method of attacking the evil is to remove the cause. This requires first a close study of the individual drinker, to make sure what is the cause, or at least the principal cause, and then a long and arduous effort to bring about its removal. In cases where a man's physical condition seems probably the cause of his intemperance, it is sometimes possible to carry on a campaign of education in the home which will result in establishing better conditions, and in building up for him a physique which shall make the demand for a stimulant no longer irresistible. In such instances there is always a question as to whether the man is under-nourished because his income is insufficient for the maintenance of his family and himself in a state of physical efficiency, or whether his wife does not know how to make the best use of what he brings in. Naturally, one has to know a family pretty well before one can judge of this, and must establish terms of friendly intimacy with the wife before making suggestions as to how she can obtain better results for her outlay, provided her lack of knowledge is respon-

sible for the trouble. Whatever the original cause of intemperance, an improvement of home conditions, when these are bad, in respect to cooking, ventilation and neatness, will aid in overcoming the evil.

Since much intemperance is due to a lack of opportunities for wholesome recreation, anything which offers a chance for relaxation and social enjoyment should be earnestly sought. Some discussion will be given in another chapter of substitutes for the saloon, which give the opportunity for society and enjoyment without the temptation to over-indulgence in drink. In communities where such substitutes do not exist, the visitor may do something by trying to find any taste the man may possess and providing some means of gratifying this. When the free garden plots, or "Pingree potato patches" were started, it was found that more than one man addicted to drink became so much interested in the cultivation of his plot that he practically gave up liquor for the sake of putting his spare time and money into its cultivation. Sometimes the effort to interest a man works out into grotesque developments.

"Humanly speaking," said one worker, "it was a graphophone, one of those detestable, squawking contrivances, and a number of records, mostly of sentimental songs or alleged humorous recitations, which saved Jim Smith from drinking himself to death. I don't think he wanted to be a drunkard, but he had got started and couldn't seem to stop. He told me about it in a moment of confidence. 'You see,' he said, 'when I've come home and had my supper, it's darned dull sitting 'round the house alone. The missis is washing the dishes or putting the kids to bed, and there ain't nothing going on, and some of the boys is sure to come

along and I go off with 'em to the saloons. Sometimes I've kept away for as much as three weeks, but a man's got to have something to do with himself, and there's always something doing there. Why,' he ended, admiringly, 'they've got a talking machine there that's a whole show by itself.'

"I suppressed a natural inclination to suggest that he might help Mrs. Smith wash the dishes, if he found doing nothing so dull, and tried to see the situation as he did. He was a good-natured but rather weak man. It was natural for him to want company and amusement. He had tried, I knew, to break off his habit, but the saloon's attractions and associations were too strong for him. The end of my deliberations was a consultation with Mrs. Smith, and the installation of a graphophone, for which I paid, with the understanding that they were to pay me in small instalments.

"The first night was a gala occasion. All the neighbors wanted to hear it, but as space was limited, it was the prize of the earlier comers. Jim tentatively proposed a system of relays of hearers, which would have kept the room full all night, but Mrs. Smith, with an eye to the following evenings, decisively regretted the smallness of her house and urged the disappointed ones to come next night. They came, and kept on coming. When interest seemed to be flagging a little, I came down with some new records, and those in their turn had to be exhibited to the whole neighborhood. It got to be quite the regular thing for at least two or three of the neighbors to drop in on Jim after supper, and as Mrs. Smith never objected to their pipes, and the graphophone was inexhaustible, it was nearly as cheerful a circle as at the saloon. Then listening to the machine fired Jim's

ambition to do some singing himself, and we discovered he had a very passable voice. It was his own proposition that he should join some singing club, a proposition which he promptly carried out. Mrs. Smith seized the occasion and moved into a new neighborhood, where Jim didn't know the frequenters of the saloons, and he was too busy with his music and his graphophone—which had to be shown off to all the new neighbors, of course —to get into that crowd. He didn't become a model of sobriety all at once, but he has been steadily improving ever since he got the machine, and I confidently expect to see the time when he will have forgotten that drink ever had any particular attraction for him."

In addition to more healthful conditions of living and new interests, with opportunities for society away from the temptation to drink, it will be found as a rule that whatever strengthens the family tie makes it easier for a man to forego an accustomed stimulant. It is well, therefore, whenever possible, to secure opportunities for the family to enjoy themselves together. Friendly counsel to the wife as to how to make her home more cheerful and attractive, the loan of books or papers which may interest her and her husband alike, tickets for concerts or lectures which they may attend together, fresh-air outings, or other arrangements which may make it possible for the family to go out together for a Saturday afternoon picnic or a Sunday in the country—all these and many other devices may be of use.

Such efforts against so serious an evil as intemperance may seem woefully trivial. They are not panaceas, certainly, and in many cases they will seem to have no effect at all. Still, they are worth while in themselves, and if the visitor feels in addition the capacity for direct

preaching of temperance and deems it justified by the circumstances, it is not precluded. The indirect methods have this great advantage, that they cannot in any way hurt the self-respect of the man for whose benefit they are undertaken, while a direct attack on the subject of his habits may not only humiliate but alienate him, and render the visitor's further efforts futile.

There is one class for whom such indirect work is apt to be especially helpful, and that is the English workmen newly arrived in this country. The first two years of an English laborer's stay here are apt to be a time of serious danger. He has in all probability been accustomed to drink beer as a matter of course at home, without feeling any ill effect from it, and naturally he no more thinks of giving it up on coming to America than of giving up tobacco or sugar. But the difference in the climate and the difference in the beer are alike marked and harmful in their effects, and the man who, in the old country, might have gone on drinking moderately all his life, is in peril of becoming a heavy drinker here. At the same time that this unanticipated temptation besets him, the fact that he is among strangers and no longer has an established reputation to live up to, weakens the restraints which would keep him from yielding. Whatever can be done to increase the strength of his family ties, to sustain his self-respect and to make him feel that he has a character to maintain, is the best way of helping him.

So far we have considered only the moderate or occasional drinkers. Sometimes the worker will come in contact with a family in which the man is a vicious or a confirmed drunkard. If, when drinking, he is violent and abusive, it may be necessary to take legal steps for the protection of his wife and children, or, if he has be-

come such a confirmed drunkard that he is a burden upon the family, the law may again be invoked. This is never a satisfactory conclusion, for at best it rarely amounts to anything beyond getting the man out of the way temporarily, without doing anything to make him better. In most places the penalty for habitual drunkenness is a jail sentence of varying length—or shortness. No reformatory work is attempted, no effort is made so to build up the man's physique as to make him less susceptible to temptation, and he comes out unimproved, to begin drinking once more, to be re-arrested, re-sentenced, and to go through the dreary round again and again until some day death comes to his relief.

Sometimes, if a man of this kind will consent to enter a sanitarium or to take the Keeley or some similar treatment, a cure may be effected; and sometimes instances of conversion occur little short of the miraculous. Miracles, however, cannot be counted on, and after a man has reached a certain stage in intemperance his case is, humanly speaking, hopeless. Whether this stage has been reached or not is open to question, and if the visitor has the necessary means and can secure the patient's consent, sanitarium treatment may perhaps restore him to sobriety, even though his condition had been most discouraging. If this is impossible, admission may sometimes be secured to an Inebriates' Home, in which he can live not unhappily in sobriety and partial self-support. Too often it will be found impossible to make use of either alternative. Then, for the sake of the family, it is usually best to insist upon legal proceedings against the man, and to refuse assistance unless these are taken.

A woman's drinking is felt to be more of a menace to

the home than a man's, since it brings both the liquor and its effects more directly into the house than does his. Also, a woman, being with her children far more than is a man, can better protect them from their father's intemperance than he can from hers. Fortunately drinking is not so common among women as among men, and their love of their children is apt to be stronger, affording a powerful motive for their abstinence, or for their reformation if they have fallen into intemperance.

What has been said above of the causes producing intemperance, and of the indirect methods of combating it, applies with even more force to women than to men. The monotony of a woman's life is apt to be greater than a man's, her malnutrition at least as great, while her physical strength is less, and thus she is more susceptible to the demand for a stimulant. A woman's acquaintances are apt to be her immediate neighbors, and her drinking habits are often directly due to the influence of these neighbors. Therefore, good results can sometimes be obtained by persuading the family to remove to a better neighborhood, and by trying to secure for the woman, through a mothers' meeting or sewing circle or club group of some kind, a different set of acquaintances. In itself membership in some such group is helpful, breaking the monotony of household duties, introducing a pleasant social element, and widening the field of her interests.

When a woman has become a confirmed drunkard, the welfare of the children demands legal action. If the husband is a man of good character, he will have no difficulty at all in securing a decree giving him the custody of the children, and forbidding their mother access to them. If he also is intemperate or otherwise dis-

qualified for their guardianship, unless some relative can be found willing to take care of the children, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children should be appealed to, and the children legally removed from their parents' custody and control. This may be a desirable preliminary to placing them with a relative, if one can be found to take them, as it deprives the parents of any further rights over the children. If the children are taken by friends without this formality having been gone through with, the parents may at any time give considerable trouble by attempting to regain possession of them.

To summarize: In cases in which drunkenness seems curable, every effort should be made to induce the drinker to give up the habit, and the efforts most likely to succeed are those which substitute for it some other interest or enjoyment. After intemperance has reached a certain stage it must be regarded as a serious disease, which can be cured, if at all, only by long continued treatment—treatment which, under present conditions, it is exceedingly difficult to secure for people without means. If this treatment cannot be given, the welfare of the children may demand the breaking up of the family, either through a legal separation, or through the formal removal of the children from their parents' custody. This is a conclusion to be avoided wherever possible, but when, after careful observation and experiment, it becomes evident that it is a choice between this and the sacrifice of the children, the welfare of the latter should be the determining consideration.

CHAPTER XIII

CARE OF NEEDY FAMILIES: DESERTION

THE change in philanthropic methods, due to a closer study of the causes of poverty and a consideration of the social aspects of the individual case, is nowhere more apparent than in the attitude toward deserted families. Fifteen years ago, the deserted family was hardly differentiated from any other instance of poverty; it was a family in want, and the mere fact that that want was caused by the desertion of the natural breadwinner did not seem to the philanthropists of the day to have any material bearing on the situation. It is significant that in the comparative table of causes of poverty given by Dr. Warner in American Charities, a book published so lately as 1894, desertion is not given alone as a cause, but is included under the heading, "No Male Support," which, a footnote assures us, covers "Death of Husband" and "Desertion." "No Male Support," in its turn, is classed under causes indicating misfortune.[1] Today desertion is not only recognized as a cause of poverty of sufficient importance to merit separate and serious consideration, but in most of the large cities special committees have been appointed to gather statistics and ponder the question in all its bearings. The subject is discussed at almost every national or state conference, it appears in the pages of every magazine devoted to philanthropy, and it is rapidly developing a literature of its own.

[1] American Charities, Table IV.

One reason for this change of attitude is the growing number of cases of desertion of wife or family, and the consequent increase in the burden of supporting these deserted families which is thrown upon the community. There is little question that the evil is increasing, but few realize its present extent. In a careful study of the subject, Mr. Wm. H. Baldwin states the situation concisely and forcibly:

"More than seven per cent. of all the cases treated"—in Washington, during the past nine years—"have been deserted wives. In Boston the average of all records kept, beginning with 1889, is practically ten per cent. In Orange, N. J., the average for the last three years is just eleven per cent., while in Seattle, Wash., cases of deserted wives made up more than thirteen per cent. of all relieved during seven months of the last fiscal year. Any conduct which accounts for one-tenth of all the cases which charitable societies are called on to assist demands careful attention from these agencies, as well as from those who may be asked by them to lessen the burden by passing laws which will oblige the deserter to assume his share, and deter others from deserting by closing the way of escape."[1]

It adds emphasis to the above statement when careful students of the statistics of charitable relief tell us that desertion is responsible for more cases of want than any other one cause, except illness. Since every one of the deserted families appearing in these statistics becomes a charge upon the public to some degree and for some length of time, and since their need of help frequently continues over long periods, it is self-evident that the problem is one of serious proportions.

One consequence of the closer study given to this cause is a marked change in the treatment of a deserted

[1] Family Desertion and Non-Support Laws, p. 8.

family. Fifteen years ago, as is clearly indicated by the classification given by Dr. Warner, a deserted family was supposed to occupy the same position as a family which had lost its head by death. The widow or the deserted wife succeeded to the sole responsibility, and the efforts of the charitable public were directed toward making her situation as easy as possible. Today it is felt that charitable workers have a distinct duty to perform towards the deserter, and while the care of the family is by no means to be neglected, no pains must be spared to find the recreant husband and father for the purpose either of bringing him back to his duties or seeing that his evasion is punished.

When a worker is brought into touch with a deserted family, the first steps should be the same as in any other case of need. Emergency aid, if really required, should be given, and all the information attainable bearing on the situation should be gathered. What action should be taken thereafter depends largely upon what this investigation reveals as to the character and habits of the family.

A good deal of sympathy has been expressed recently for the deserter, and we have had vivid pictures of the man driven by stress of poverty to abandon his family, finding himself unable to support them, and feeling both that they will be better cared for if he is out of the way, and that he cannot bring himself to appeal for charity. Such instances may occur, but the careful studies of desertion made in Boston, in Philadelphia and Washington, and the study made in New York of cases gathered from all over the country, go to show that the deserter of this kind, if he exists at all, is in a small

minority, and that ordinarily the man who abandons wife and children is influenced by frankly selfish motives.

A study of the reasons for a man's deserting his family, undertaken in New York, shows a variety of surface causes. In nearly one-third of the cases considered, the men left just before or after the birth of a child; about one-seventh left during or just after a spree, and a slightly larger proportion left as the immediate consequence of a quarrel. "Fifty-five had been quarreling with their wives—'over religious matters,' 'because she had asked him to go to work,' or had refused to support him any longer, or 'had found fault with his ways,' or some unspecified but doubtless equally irreconcilable difference of opinion. One had 'been beating his wife with a stove-lifter, but when a neighbor interfered he ran away and stayed for four years.'" On the whole, the immediate reasons are nearly as various as the deserters. These seem, however, not to be so much reasons as pretexts—mere occasions rather than causes. Restlessness, a desire to escape the responsibilities of family life, the ease of getting away, and the facility with which the burden of a family's support may be shifted from the father to the public—these are some of the real causes operating to increase the number of deserters, and to throw a growing and almost intolerable burden upon the charitable resources of the community.

For the purpose of considering methods of treatment, deserters may be roughly divided into three groups—the bona fide deserter for the first time, the habitual deserter, and the feigned deserter. These classes might be numerously subdivided, but for working purpose this grouping will answer.

If the desertion is for the first time, it is most desir-

able both to keep the family from becoming accustomed to depending on outside help, and to find the husband and secure his return—without the intervention of the law if possible, with it if necessary. If the temporary aid the family must have can be secured, even at the cost of much time and trouble, from friends and relatives, from their church or from any other natural source, the good result will be twofold; every one of those helping will become an active agent in seeking the return of the missing husband, and the latter will not be tempted to repeat his escapade by finding how all too ready the community is to undertake the support of his family when it suits him to abandon it. No permanent provision for the family should be made until every effort to locate the missing man has failed and there seems good reason to believe that his departure is final.

If it is known that news of his family will reach the absentee, good results can sometimes be obtained by refusing all aid. This is a difficult plan to carry out, and would not be available in most instances. The Philadelphia Society for Organizing Charity, however, gives a story of its effectiveness in one case, which illustrates the complexity of the average instance of desertion.

"The visitor from the Society found a rather discouraging situation when she first went to see Mrs. O'Connell, a woman whose husband had deserted her six weeks before, leaving her penniless with six children, the oldest eleven years of age, and the baby only two weeks old. Mrs. O'Connell was loud in her denunciation of her husband's drinking habits and unkindness to her, and vowed that she would never again live with him. * * *

"It became apparent that Mrs. O'Connell was capable,

energetic and industrious, but possessed of a hot temper and a sharp tongue, and her mother-love, while it was very intense for her own, had not been big enough to take in her step-children, even delicate, half-invalid Mamie. It was this very lack in her which had been the most serious source of trouble between her and her husband; for, although no one pretended to deny that he drank a good deal more than he should, and that his treatment of his wife had not always been calculated to soothe her irritable disposition, he had the good qualities of a strong feeling for his home and a very real love for his children. With the redeeming features in both of them as a background, it seemed that in some way it ought to be possible to bring them together again and to help them to rebuild their home life—certainly to prevail upon the husband to resume responsibility for the support of his family. To accomplish this end, however, great firmness and tact were necessary. Although the O'Connells knew Henry's whereabouts, they could not be induced to reveal it. And Mrs. O'Connell's relatives were not able or willing to help her very much and agreed with us that if O'Connell did not soon return, his family would have to be broken up. To this Mrs. O'Connell was much opposed, as she was determined to keep her children with her and thought that the Society for Organizing Charity ought to add to her earnings whatever was necessary to make it possible. The Society knew that this would tend to make Henry O'Connell feel that his family was getting on very nicely without him, and that he need not return. Poor Mrs. O'Connell struggled on, earning as much as she could by washing, but it is not strange if from her point of view it seemed a bit hard that, when she was doing her best, the Society

should refuse to help her out by gifts of money or food. After several months she found the struggle too unequal, so she begged to have word sent to her husband that the family must be broken up if he did not return speedily to care for them, and that she would withdraw the warrant against him if he did so.

"His sisters and brothers had said he was ill, and when he appeared a couple of weeks after his wife's message, he certainly looked as if he had been. Before that Mrs. O'Connell had been inclined to disbelieve all the accounts of his sickness, and even the truth of the statement that he was out of Philadelphia. But she had softened a good deal toward him by the time he came home. With her resolution to control her temper and his to keep from drinking, they began life together over again."

In trying to reëstablish the husband in his duties as head of a family, the preliminary difficulty is to find him. It is but rarely that, as in the case of the O'Connells, relatives know where he is and will act as intermediaries. Sometimes the police can trace him, especially if he has remained in his home town. Sometimes he will have told companions where he is going, or have dropped some hint in his wife's hearing. It is worth while to have enquiries made in any city where he has formerly lived or been employed. If he is found in any city which has a charity organization society, it is well to ask that one of its agents will visit him and try to persuade him either to return, or, if he is working, to send for his family. This will often render it unnecessary to resort to legal measures, but if persuasion fails, the law should be invoked.

This, however, should not be undertaken without careful legal advice. The laws governing desertion vary

from state to state. In a few places it is classed as a felony, and if the deserter has left the state he may be extradited upon demand. In most places it is only a misdemeanor. Whether or not, under these latter circumstances, extradition can be secured will depend largely upon the attitude of the legal authorities of the two states concerned. At least one instance of extradition from and by states regarding desertion as a misdemeanor has been reported, but the process is troublesome, and its results by no means certain.

Usually workers who wish to take legal action content themselves, if the husband has left the state, with sending the wife after him, in which case, being in the same state with him, she may bring suit against him for non-support. It is essential to secure a lawyer's advice on such points before attempting action.

The men of the second group, the habitual deserters, are the bane of the charity worker. Sometimes such a man disappears a short time before the birth of a child. His wife, perhaps a self-respecting, decent woman, will struggle along doing what she can for the support of her children, until her condition renders her helpless. Then public or private charity comes to the rescue, aid is provided, the family kept together, and, perhaps, as weeks pass by, reëstablished on a comfortable basis, until suddenly the man reappears to take up his interrupted home life as if nothing had happened, and to continue it until the next occasion when he wishes to avoid increased expense and diminished comfort, when he again disappears, and the whole process is gone through with once more.

Or perhaps such a deserter may be a periodic drinker, who, after months of sobriety, will suddenly yield to the

craving for drink, use up all his money, pawn everything he can lay hands on, and, leaving his wife in absolute destitution, finally disappear, entirely confident that outside help will not be wanting to take care of her and the children until it suits him to reappear. Or he may be simply the victim of a wandering disposition—a married tramp, who refuses to be bound by the responsibilities he has assumed, but who finds it convenient to have a home to which he may return when tired of roving.

In any case the result on the family is much the same. It is bad enough for a man to desert his children utterly and leave the care of their upbringing to be shared between his wife and the community; it is worse when he comes and goes, breaking up any arrangement which may have been made for their permanent care, forcing them to pass through alternate periods of destitution, dependence on charity and whole or partial self-support, and continually increasing the size of the family for which he will make no adequate provision.

For the sake of preventing such a state of affairs, many of the most experienced workers advise that after a man has twice deserted his family, no aid shall be given, in case of further desertion, except upon condition of an absolute separation between the couple. If the wife declines to agree to this, they counsel refusing all help, with a view to having the family broken up. If aid can be entirely withheld, it will mean that the wife must go to work outside of her home—usually that she must give up the home altogether. Perhaps it may be necessary for her to go with her children into an institution, or to place some of the children in an institution, or to leave them in the care of relatives or friends, while she

with one or two of the youngest goes into service, or in some other way provides for herself and them.

Breaking up a home in this manner is not an ideal solution of the problem, but it has this advantage, that it renders it impossible for the husband to come and go at pleasure. In some cases, a man returning and finding his family thus scattered, has set himself to work in good earnest to rebuild the home, and has thenceforth stayed in it and done his part manfully. In others, this course has at least prevented any further increase in the family, a result greatly to be desired in view of the inevitable heritage of weakened constitution and unhealthful environment and unfortunate training which awaits the children of such a union.

It is often difficult to carry out this resolution to withhold aid. The situation of the deserted family is a pitiable one, and even if the conscientious worker, believing that this is the only method of really helping, refuses assistance, interference is likely to come from outside. The unintelligent and thoughtless giver may be appealed to, and seeing only that here is a deserted family which is likely to be broken up through poverty, and feeling that the home is the one thing to be maintained at all costs, such a giver is likely to rush to the rescue, render nugatory all efforts to improve permanently the unsatisfactory situation, and make it possible for the deserter to come and go at pleasure. There are few cases in which thoughtless giving causes more harm.

If the wife is willing to consent to a permanent separation, the objection to giving help disappears at once, and care should be taken that sufficient aid is provided to prevent her from undergoing too heavy a strain in her efforts to fill the place of both parents. Ordinarily

a legal separation should be insisted upon. A few women may be found of sufficient firmness to keep their word in this matter, but usually if the husband reappears with a little show of penitence, and a few promises of better conduct in the future, the wife will be found ready to forget the past, and despite a long experience of the brevity of these resolutions, to believe in their persistence this time.

Moreover, if the husband chooses to assert his legal rights, it is almost impossible for the wife to refuse to live with him, unless a separation has been secured. No matter what his conduct has been, no matter whether he has contributed to her support or she alone has provided for herself and her children for years, he is her husband and in the eyes of the law her tenement is his house. If she tries to keep him out he has a right to break in. A separation is the only way of securing her permanent freedom from his presence, unless she is of sufficiently strong moral fibre to dominate him. A separation is preferable to a divorce, as it does not give the right to remarry. If the family is Roman Catholic, their priest should be consulted, and a separation arranged only in accordance with his advice. While that church does not recognize divorce for causes arising after marriage, it does not necessarily disapprove of separation when the welfare of the family demands it.

Whether or not a permanent separation can be secured, the worker should make every effort to force the absent husband to contribute to the support of his family, or, if that cannot be done, to secure his arrest and punishment on the ground of desertion or of non-support. Often the only result of such an effort will be that the man is frightened off for a considerable

period, or perhaps for good and all, in which case the worker has some reason to follow honest Dogberry's advice, and thank heaven he is rid of a knave.

Too often it will be found impossible to reach the deserter through the law. As long as the present difficulties exist in the way of securing extradition it is an easy matter for an offender to get across a state line and laugh at efforts to secure his punishment. Even when an action can be brought, the results are apt to be unsatisfactory. If the man is ordered to pay a weekly sum towards his family's support, it is again easy for him to leave the state. If he is convicted of non-support the punishment is apt to be too light to be of much effect as a deterrent, while his imprisonment contributes nothing toward the support of his wife and children. Nevertheless, it is of much importance that every case of desertion should be prosecuted as far as possible, with a view toward making the offender's path as little attractive as may be.

Feigned desertions sometimes occur. If a family is in want, and one of its members is an able-bodied man out of work, society has a tendency to offer employment, and to refuse help if this is not accepted. Consequently, if a husband has an aversion to work, and neither he nor his wife has any objection to begging mixed with skilful falsehood, he may withdraw into a modest seclusion while she goes forth to seek aid in the rôle of a deserted wife. Sometimes the deception will be kept up for weeks or even months, help being given freely to the supposedly destitute wife and children, which is fully enjoyed by the husband, who, perhaps, has not even left the house. Of course, if a determined effort is made to

find the man, a fraud of this sort is likely to be exposed very promptly.

Throughout this discussion it has been taken for granted that the deserter is a man. It is so unusual for a woman to desert a dependent husband and children that the problem cannot be said to exist. If she deserts a self-supporting husband, the matter is not likely to be brought to the notice of a charitable worker, as the husband is still able to care for his children. If she deserts dependent children, the civil authorities take up the case rather zealously, and again the charitable worker is not likely to be called upon for a solution of the difficulty.

Neither has anything been said about the cases of almost justifiable desertion. Occasionally among the deserted wives one finds a scolding or whining woman, untidy and indolent, quarrelsome or extravagant, whose home is so little attractive and whose personality is so repellent, that the worker is conscious of considerable sympathy with the husband. Still, there are always the children to be considered. If the woman's character is not such as to justify taking the children from her, it does not justify the man in abandoning her and them, and while the worker may very properly use every means to make the wife see her duties as a home-maker, there should be no relaxation in the effort to make the man do his duty as breadwinner. What has been said in a former chapter about indirect methods of combating intemperance applies equally to desertion. Whatever helps to give a man a more healthful and attractive life, with a wholesome variety of interest and necessary recreation, tends to diminish desertion, as well as drunkenness, and to establish the home on a surer basis.

To summarize: In dealing with cases of desertion

one has a duty toward society, as well as toward the family immediately affected. The object should be the maintenance of the family group, as nearly as possible, in its integral state. If the man has proved by repeated desertions that he is a disturbing element, he should be eliminated and the family kept together without him. When this is not possible, through the refusal of the wife to separate from him, help of all kinds should be refused, and the family, when deserted, compelled to accept indoor relief, under whatever conditions the community may attach to this form of help. Every means should be tried to make the deserter voluntarily return to his duties, but if he is incorrigible, legal measures should be taken against him.

CHAPTER XIV

STANDARD OF LIVING

"To live miserable we know not why, to have the dread of hunger, to work sore and yet gain nothing,—this is the essence of poverty."—*Robert Hunter.*

IN THE cases hitherto considered distress has been due to some definite incident, accident or misdoing, as illness, lack of work, intemperance or desertion. It has been taken for granted that apart from this particular cause, the family are or should be able to maintain themselves. It may be desirable to give temporary help freely, but there is a specific cause of want, and the most important duty is to remove that, after which the reëstablishment of the family becomes a comparatively easy matter.

Unfortunately there are many cases in which the diagnosis is not so simple—cases in which, for one reason or another, the earning capacity of the family is not, at the best of times, adequate to its healthful support, and in which there seems a demand for help continuing over a term of years. When this deficiency in earning capacity is due to the death or permanent disability of some of the natural breadwinners, the question of what ought to be done is not so difficult; the main trouble lies in doing it. But when there has been no such stroke of calamity and yet the family is not properly self-sustaining, the situation is perplexing.

The problem presents itself in its most difficult form when one finds a family consisting of man, wife and

children, in which the man is sober, honest and industrious, but an unskilled workman or employed in some of the more poorly paid trades, and unable to secure wages adequate to his needs. Such families are apt to come to the notice of charitable workers during some time of special stress in which they have been forced to appeal for help, and there is a pretty general tendency for the worker to feel satisfied if the applicants can be pulled through this and restored to their former condition of self-support. In the case supposed this is entirely inadequate aid, and the worker has not really accomplished much for their benefit until they have been placed in such a position that their income is sufficient for the maintenance of a healthful standard of living.

In attempting any result of this kind the first question naturally is: "What should the family income be? How much is needed to support a given number of people, maintaining them in at least such a state of physical efficiency that they shall not, through under nutrition or frequent illnesses, find their earning capacity crippled?" This problem has never been satisfactorily worked out, and the best studies yet made in regard to it deal with foreign conditions.

The average workingman's family is supposed to consist of the parents and from two to four children. Most workers among the poor will agree that this is a conservative estimate of its size. A few years ago Mr. B. S. Rowntree carried through some careful studies of poverty in York, England, which brought him to the conclusion that the smallest possible sum on which this average family could maintain unimpaired its working capacity was twenty-one shillings eight pence per week. On any sum smaller than this the family must inevitably

go without some necessity, and by going without it render some or all of its members less able to do the work which should procure other necessities. Moreover, to make this minimum income suffice for its purpose it must be administered with the strictest economy and most scientific judgment, applying every penny to the one object of obtaining the absolutely necessary food, clothing and shelter, leaving nothing for illness, amusements, church purposes, books and papers, education, neighborly kindnesses or indulgences of any sort. Even letter writing among relatives must be dropped to save postage. Every penny was to go for the plainest possible food, for clothing selected solely on the ground of warmth and decency, and for lodging and fuel. It is unnecessary to say that the cases in which such an income would be so administered are rare.

In the United States no general agreement has been reached either as to what constitutes a normal standard of living, or what income is necessary to maintain such a standard in different parts of the country. What degree of hardship is it socially desirable that a family should be permitted to endure? What degree of comfort is required to maintain a worker and his dependents in a reasonable state of health, efficiency and morality? It is not a question of the sum on which a family can manage to exist and reproduce. When living means bare existence, its cost can be cut again and again before the irreducible minimum is reached. But it is not to the interest of society as a whole that any of its members should merely exist. The physical effect of such living has been strikingly shown in England where, in the factory districts, it has been found difficult to secure the requisite number of recruits for the army, because the

working classes have become so undersized and defective that they cannot pass the preliminary tests. Its moral effects cannot be so definitely shown, but there is a growing conviction among social workers that intemperance, licentiousness and a low moral standard generally are as often the consequence as the cause of poverty. If we are to maintain what are rather vaguely known as American conditions, the worker's income must be sufficient for healthful, moral and decent living, with some provision for education and general culture, some margin for the expenses of illness or accident, and some possibility of laying by savings for the inevitable rainy day.

What are the factors which make up such a standard of living, and on what income can they be secured? There are a few essentials which all would agree must be included. A place of shelter is indispensable, of course, but it is not enough that it should be merely a shelter. It must be reasonably sanitary, and must be roomy enough to permit of keeping up the ordinary decencies of life. Dark, unventilated rooms make directly for disease or chronic invalidism. Toilet arrangements used in common by a whole tenement are dangerous alike to health and morals. Overcrowding is not only inimical to health, but may have dire effects upon the character. Concerning what constitutes overcrowding there is some difference of opinion. Recent investigators in New York have fixed upon one and a half persons to a room as the ratio which should not be exceeded, and have decided that overcrowding exists whenever more than four people occupy three rooms, or more than six people are found in four. A modification should be made in case babies or very young children

form part of the household. In view of the size of the average New York room, this estimate cannot be said to err on the side of over liberality, though the allowance may be ample in places where larger rooms are the rule. As far as health is concerned, one large room may perhaps furnish abundant sleeping accommodations for a whole family, but from the standpoint of decency and morality overcrowding exists whenever parents and grown children, or boys and girls beyond the age of early childhood, are obliged to occupy the same room, no matter what its size. It is not claiming too much to say that a normal standard of living demands a well lighted and well ventilated home, properly equipped, according to its location, with water supply and drainage and toilet accommodations, and sufficiently large to avoid any need for unhealthful or indecorous overcrowding.

Food is an even more primal necessity than shelter, yet to say what kinds and amounts should be included in a normal standard,—in other words, what a family's food ought to cost,—is a very troublesome question. Considerations of age and sex, of nationality and occupation and climate must be taken into account. It is not enough that the appetite should be dulled, and the worker and his family be unconscious of hunger. The women who live principally upon bread and tea are often quite unaware that they are hungry, yet there is not the slightest question that they are under nourished. Unfortunately the importance of sufficient food of the right kind is not universally recognized, and there is a general tendency to economize in this direction whenever any special need arises. Among the very poor it is almost invariably the case that on "rent week" the

amount spent for food—an amount already in many cases entirely too small—is cruelly cut to make up the rent, which must be paid at any cost. Even among those who are above this stage, habitual under nourishment is not rare. In a recent careful study of living expenses in New York City[1] it was found that the families studied were insufficiently fed when less than twenty-two cents a day per adult male, with a proportionate allowance for women and children, was spent for food. It is difficult to see how proper nourishment can be secured for less. A dollar and a half a week does not seem an extravagant amount for the food of a man engaged in hard labor, even where prices are not quite so high as in New York. Professor Atwater, in his dietary studies in New York City, has carefully worked out the ratios between the food needed for a man at work and for the other possible members of his family. Accepting his ratios, and taking the cost of a man's food as a dollar and a half a week, we have the following table:

	Unit	Food cost per week
Man	1	$1.50
Woman	0.8	1.20
Boy, 16 to 14 years	0.8	1.20
Girl, 16 to 14 years	0.7	1.05
Child, 13 to 10 years	0.6	.90
Child, 9 to 6 years	0.5	.75
Child, 5 to 2 years	0.3	.45
Child under 2 years	0.2	.30

If anyone will take the pains to work out by this table the proper food cost per week of any needy family

[1] R. C. Chapin, The Standard of Living in New York.

in which he is interested, he is very likely to find a considerable discrepancy between his figures and the amount actually spent. Yet this table does not allow for luxuries or extravagances. It merely provides for food in such quantities and of such varieties as to keep the family strong and vigorous, enabling the workers to accomplish their day's work without exhaustion, permitting the children to develop normally, and providing for both parents and children some reserve of strength to fight off disease, or to combat it when once it has gained a hold. This it may do if administered with reasonable skill, intelligence and thrift by the housewife. Less than this can hardly be accepted as constituting a satisfactory standard in the matter of food.

After food and shelter, comes clothing, and here again we have rather vague ideas both as to what is necessary and as to the cost at which it should be obtained. All would admit that clothing ought to be sufficient in quantity and in quality to answer the demands of health, decency and comfort. Most of us would go further and say that it should have sufficient relation to prevailing modes of dress not to make the wearer uncomfortably conspicuous. These conditions are by no means universally met; quantity, especially in the matter of underwear, is apt to be insufficient, and quality inferior. Among the self-respecting poor a tremendous effort is usually made to preserve appearances, even at the cost of comfort and healthfulness. This feeling is sometimes carried to unfortunate extremes, but in itself it is entirely commendable. Here, as elsewhere, the life is more than the meat, and the family which loses its desire to keep up appearances is in a parlous state. In the New York investigation already referred to $100 a year was fixed

as the lowest possible expenditure per annum to meet absolute needs for a family consisting of father, mother and from two to four children. This makes no allowance for following fashions or seeking anything of beauty; it merely allows what is essential for health and decency.

Fuel and light are essentials which do not admit of much discussion. The amount of fuel used is often inadequate. Heat is economized in every way, and the first method which suggests itself in winter is to shut out all fresh and therefore cold air. Most of us feel our enthusiasm for ventilation declining when our rooms are under heated, and the poor share this general tendency. The normal standard of living ought to include a sufficient supply of fuel to keep a family comfortable, not merely enough to keep them from acute suffering.

Furniture and household plenishings make up another necessity of existence. Usually a couple begin life with a certain supply, and the fact that they have some of the necessary articles is apt to blind observers to the need for regarding this as a permanent item in the expense account. Yet the original supply steadily wears out, and as the family increases in size more furniture is urgently needed. No budget even approaches completeness which does not permit of repairing and replacing furniture and furnishings as the need arises, and include some allowance for additions to the original stock.

These items, shelter, food, clothing, fuel and light, and furniture, all would agree are essential to life, and the failure to secure them in sufficient abundance and of suitable quality is harmful to health and sometimes to character as well. But there are certain other items, by no means so generally recognized as indispensable, which

nevertheless are essential to what should be a normal standard of living. Car fares have become an absolutely necessary expense in the large cities where a worker cannot live near his place of employment. In all places there should be something for what may be called preventive medical care, for looking after the eyes and the teeth, for building up a delicate child, or for giving the brief rest which may save an overwrought worker from a serious breakdown. The public schools simplify the question of education, yet there must be some allowance for instruction and training. Some provision for recreation there ought to be, and something for books and papers. And there should be enough to allow savings for future needs, enough to make it possible to lay by something for the expenses of birth and death, for the illnesses or accidents or hard times which are sure to come. A family which must look to the free dispensary for medical advice, and to the hospital or visiting nurse for care in illness, which must disregard the health of its members until they actually fall sick, and which under any stress of illness or accident or industrial depression, must look for help to others, is not self-supporting. A family which must put its children to work the moment they reach the legal age, which cannot afford to give them industrial training, or to let them take places which bring in little but give them opportunities for learning a trade and earning more in the future,—such a family is not giving its children a fair chance, nor keeping up the standard which it may itself have achieved or inherited. A normal standard must keep in view the future as well as the present efficiency of those affected, and must provide moreover for some at least of those elements of

happy and healthful living which are not immediately and obviously necessary.

"I admit," says Father Ryan, in discussing this subject, "that this minimum standard includes some things that are only conventionally necessary. These conventional goods must be had because they are essential to that self-respect which is an indispensable element of even the poorest and lowliest life that can be called decent and reasonable. So highly prized are these goods that most self-respecting men will secure them at the cost of such absolute necessities as health, efficiency and morality. For example, they will deprive themselves of some of the food and clothing that is necessary for physical well being rather than go without becoming apparel and becoming household furnishing."[1]

What income is necessary to maintain this normal standard below which a family may not fall without serious risk of deterioration? The New York investigation already referred to gives some figures of striking significance. The families studied were divided into groups according to income, which ranged from six hundred to one thousand dollars or over. As might be expected in New York, overcrowding was common; not until the income was well past the thousand dollar mark did it cease to appear as a serious evil. Insufficient clothing and under nourishment were painfully common in the lower income groups. Fifty per cent. of those whose incomes ranged between six and eight hundred dollars spent less for clothing than the minimum sum deemed possible. Of those whose yearly receipts fell below six hundred dollars, three-fourths were underfed, while of those having between six hundred and eight hundred dollars a year one-third were insufficiently

[1] Rev. J. H. Ryan., N. C. C. C., 1907, p. 343.

nourished. In other words, overcrowding and an inadequate supply of food and clothing were common so long as the yearly income ranged below eight hundred dollars. In a preliminary report, the committee in charge of the investigation, analyzing the budgets secured, declared:

"It requires no citation of elaborate statistics to bring convincing proof that $600.00 to $700.00 is wholly inadequate to maintain a proper standard of living, and no self-respecting family should be asked or expected to live upon such an income." . . .

"The Committee believes that with an income of between $700.00 and $800.00 a family can barely support itself, provided that it is subjected to no extraordinary expenditures by reason of sickness, death or other untoward circumstance. Such a family can live without charitable assistance, through exceptional management and in the absence of emergencies." . . . .

"The Committee is of the opinion that it is fairly conservative in its estimate that $825.00 is sufficient for the average family of five individuals, comprising the father, mother and three children under fourteen years of age, to maintain a fairly proper standard of living in the Borough of Manhattan."[1]

Outside of New York City no such elaborate studies have been made, but there seems a rather general agreement that an ordinary laborer's wages are not sufficient: "For the great mass of unskilled workingmen," says John Mitchell, "residing in towns and cities with a population of from five thousand to one hundred thousand, the fair wage—a wage consistent with American standards of living—should not be less than six hundred dollars a year." Father Ryan is in substantial agreement with this estimate. "Anything less than six hun-

[1] Standard of Living in New York City, pp. 278, 281.

dred dollars a year," he declares, "is not decent living in any of the cities of the United States. This sum is probably a decent livelihood in the cities of the Southern States, in which fuel, clothing and food, and some other items of expenditure are cheaper than in the North; it is possibly a decent livelihood in the moderately sized cities of the West, North and East; in some of the largest cities of the last named regions it is certainly not a decent livelihood."

It is interesting to observe that according to the opinions of employees themselves in some of these large cities, six hundred dollars a year, or two dollars a day, is not enough. Three years ago, when the cost of living was slightly lower than at present, the following item was sent out by the Associated Press:

CHICAGO, Nov. 21.—Can a teamster buy clothing and shoes for himself and family, pay doctors' bills, buy school books for his children and get the minor household necessities for three cents a day? That is the question that a committee from the Oil Wagon Drivers' Union asked Manager Stephen N. Hurd, of the Standard Oil Company, yesterday.

The oil wagon drivers receive $2 a day and are asking for an increase to $75 a month. They adopted a novel method of presenting their case to the representatives of the richest corporation in the world. A committee headed by James Duffy, the business agent of the union, called on Manager Hurd yesterday.

"I want to show you what it costs the average family to live," said Duffy. He presented a schedule showing that rent, food, fuel, light and car fare cost a man $1.97 a day.

"We get $2 a day," said Duffy, "and I ask if you think that we can buy clothing and other necessary things on three cents a day? Could you live on $2 a day yourself, Mr. Hurd?"

"No, I don't believe I could, boys," said Mr. Hurd, "and probably you can't either, but the fact is I can get plenty of teamsters who are willing to work for that pay. That is really what governs wages more than the cost of living."

But whether or not two dollars a day is sufficient for the healthful support of a family, in view of the fact that the average workingman, according to the United States census, receives less than five hundred dollars yearly, it is evidently too high a standard for the charity worker to adopt. Nevertheless, it gives some idea of the amount needed. Making all due allowance for differences in prices, and for differences in ideals of living, it is yet clear that when a man with a wife and from two to four children dependent on him finds himself unable to earn more than from eight to ten dollars a week, the income must be increased in some way, or the family must suffer.

Of course skilled workmen earn considerably more than this, but many unskilled workers, especially among the foreigners, earn less. A dollar and a half a day is in many places the outside price for unskilled labor. This is paid only for the time actually spent in work, and the loss from stoppages due to no fault of the laborer materially diminishes the total. What this lower wage means in terms of living was earnestly set forth in the autumn of 1908, when the brickmakers of Perth Amboy and neighboring towns went on strike for higher wages, and their spokesmen summed up the cost of their actual necessities:

"These men, Father Gross says, cannot live on $1.40 a day. With twenty-five working days a month, that means only $35 wages. In Perth Amboy their rent is $8, their food $15, their coal $5, and their clothes $10, a total of $38, with nothing allowed for sickness, for the

expenses of childbirth, for tobacco or beer or newspapers or school books, or furniture or dishes or dues of church and benefit societies. A dollar and a half a day is the least they can do it on, he believes. Father Zielinski agreed. Mr. Nanassy would place it at $1.75 a day."[1]

Unfortunately, wages not infrequently fall below even the dollar and forty cents a day which these men found impossibly low. The census of 1900 showed that 30.4 per cent. of all male workers over sixteen employed in cotton mills received less than six dollars a week, even when working steadily. In the shoe trades, 51 per cent. of all general hands and helpers received less than this amount. Most charity workers could report cases from their own experience of men earning five dollars a week or less when working full time, who, even at that, may have long periods of non-employment, with a resultant loss of wages.

Sometimes the wages fall to a disastrously low figure. Dr. Daniels, in a study of over five hundred families in the tenements of New York, visited professionally, finds that "in no case in over five hundred and fifteen families were the women working other than from dire necessity. The average weekly income from the man's work was $3.81. The average rent (the one item in the living expenses which must be paid and paid promptly) was $8.99 per month. The average family to be supported was of four and one-half persons. As it requires more than two weeks wages to pay one month's rent, it is very

[1] Charities and The Commons, Dec. 12, 1908. The figures given are for families consisting of parents and from three to five children. The expenses for clothing are heavy, owing to the kind of work the men do, which necessitates special shoes and outer wear.

evident that the women must work or the family go hungry. . . . The actual amount of money which the women earned averaged $1.04 per week. The combined income of the men and women averaged $4.85. The additional sources of income came from the work of persons under eighteen years, and from what could be received from boarders and lodgers. This made the average income from all sources, for over 515 families, $5.69."[1]

These conditions existed among the poorest class of tenement workers, but they are by no means confined to that class. The published statements made and not contradicted at the time of the strike in the Chicago stockyards showed an equally bad state of affairs. Wages had reached a point at which living in accordance with an American standard was an impossibility, and under the lower standard adopted, the life of the workers was rather indescribable in its crowding, its squalor, its lack of any possibility of home life, and its sacrifice of the children. Equally bad conditions, in regard to wages, are found in other industries scattered through the country, though, as living expenses are lighter outside of large cities, it is not common to find such extreme evidences of poverty.

And there is still one further consideration to be taken into account in connection with these lower wages. It is impossible that the families with these meagre incomes should buy their food in quantity; they have neither the means to buy it, nor the room to keep it. They must buy as they need, and as their purse permits. Because they must buy in such small amounts, they get poorer quality and pay higher prices. They have no chance for

[1] Sixth Annual Report of National Consumers' League, p. 30.

the economies in buying which are open to the more opulent purchaser. Their very poverty forces them into the most extravagant buying. "The poor housewife is perhaps eager above all persons to make good bargains," says Dr. Forman, "but the meagreness of her purse prevents her from making them. . . . These compulsory losses occur all along the line. On clothing and furniture the loss varies from 20 to 40 per cent.; on insurance it is always as much as 50 per cent.; on fuel purchased in small quantity it is at least 25 per cent. What is the actual total loss which the poor sustain by reason of their bad bargains? Precisely to what extent are the poor destroyed by their poverty? A very careful and elaborate study enables us to give a tolerably satisfactory answer to this question. And the answer is a very cruel one: The amount of the leakage caused by the bad bargains which the poor are compelled to make is fully 10 per cent. of the income. When, therefore, we figure on standards of living for the very poor we must subtract from the normal earnings the one-tenth which the poor must lose simply because they are poor."[1]

It is self evident that a family cannot live properly on these smaller incomes, especially with this steady loss on every purchase reducing them still further, so various devices will be resorted to in order to supplement the man's earnings. Generally the wife will be found contributing to the income, either by going out to work or by taking boarders or lodgers. The children will be put to work as soon as the law or a lax inspector will permit. Those who are too young to work will be sent out to gather coal from the dumps or from the railroad tracks. The whole family will be insufficiently nourished and

[1] Dr. S. E. Forman, N. C. C. C., 1906, p. 349.

clothed, and frequent illnesses will result. Every cessation of work for the father or mother, every accident or illness or sudden emergency of any kind will necessitate an appeal to charity. The natural effect of under-nutrition, extreme want, discouragement and too early labor will be to make the whole family less and less self-dependent, and more and more inclined to supplement and finally supersede their own earnings by the proceeds of beggary. Even when this result does not appear, the health and therefore the earning capacity of the family is likely to be constantly deteriorating, and the results may at any time be disastrous.

The ill effects of such a standard of living are evident; the remedy is less apparent. From the standpoint of the individual family it might be very well to supplement the man's earnings by a sufficient regular sum to make the family fairly comfortable, but the social effects of such action would certainly be calamitous, tending to reduce wages still further, and to bring about a long train of abuses. Previous to the reform of the Poor Laws in 1834 England tried the experiment of supplementing wages of able-bodied laborers by poor relief, and her experience was decisive. No one who looks beyond the immediate relief of a particular family and who takes into account the welfare of society, and more especially of the poor as a class, would be willing to see that device reintroduced.

One remedy which is occasionally highly recommended is to teach the poor greater thrift. We hear much about the extravagance of the poor, of the recklessness with which they waste their pennies, of their fondness for cheap and useless purchases, of their ignorance of food values, and the consequent waste in their buying and

cooking, of their persistent inclination for buying on the instalment plan, and of their general tendency to throw away money in every direction. There is certainly a modicum of truth in all this. Some of the poor are unquestionably extravagant. Many could be helped by a better knowledge of the nutritive values of different foods, and of the best methods of preparing and serving them. Yet in many cases, also, the poor practice a degree of intelligent thrift which would astonish their critics. And it must always be remembered, too, that the effort to live on an inadequate amount leads inevitably to physical and often to moral deterioration. An Italian family newly arrived will lay by money under conditions in which an American laborer's family would be unable to live without help. But the Italians will do it by keeping their children away from school that they may work; by living on a wholly insufficient diet, so that their children become undersized and rickety; by taking in boarders and lodgers to the destruction of family privacy; by devoting the whole force and intelligence of the whole family to the one purpose of living cheaply and saving money. This course raises the individual family above want, but it does not produce good citizens. Few would be willing to see Americans adopt the foreign standard of living; it is decidedly better that our standards, involving education and healthful nurture for the children, reasonable comforts and leisure and opportunities for recreation for all the family, should be adopted by the foreigners. On occasion, instruction in the wise use of money may help to lessen the discrepancy between actual income and necessary outgo, but in the cases of families with the wholly inadequate incomes we are now considering, it can never be anything but a more

or less ineffectual palliative. In order to meet the difficulty fully, the family income must be increased in some way.

The remedy which naturally suggests itself is to secure better paid work for the man. The unskilled laborer has very little power of looking over the field of employment, finding where higher rates of wages prevail, and transferring himself to a more profitable industry. Where he is he remains, helpless to improve his condition, although elsewhere there may be crying need for the labor he can furnish. Here the visitor can render valuable help, finding out in what industries labor is more needed, and whether the unskilled laborer can in some other form of employment gain better wages or more regular work.

Sometimes it may be well to remove the family to another location where manual labor is not so over plentiful. In many parts of the country there is a demand for farm labor for a considerable portion of the year, while the cost of living is apt to be much less than in a city. If the man is willing and able to undertake farm work it is well worth while trying to look up some opening of this kind. In some cases it has been found possible to set up the family in a little place of their own, advancing the necessary capital, to be repaid as the venture succeeds. This would not be a generally applicable method, but works well with an occasional family accustomed to the intensive cultivation of the soil, and knowing, too, how to avail themselves of the services of every member of the family.

Frequently the family will be found to have no idea of adaptation to a country life, but may be advantageously removed to some other city or town where wages

range higher, or where cost of living is lower, or where they have relatives with whom they may join forces. In any case in which such transportation is contemplated, there should be very careful investigation of the fitness of the family for the new environment, and no steps should be taken unless it is morally certain that their condition will be improved. There is a certain tendency to feel that a difficulty is settled when it is shifted to other hands which sometimes prompts a charitable worker to transfer a family without sufficient justification for doing so. Any attempt at establishing families elsewhere may, unless carefully managed, result merely in changing the sources from which they must receive help without in the least diminishing their need of help. This is not only useless to them, but is positively unfair to the place to which they are transferred.

If it is impossible to put the family in a better location or to secure better paid work for the man where he is, it may be advisable to try to find work for the wife, either inside or outside of her own home. This should always be recognized as an unfortunate and socially objectionable course. The entrance of married women into the field of competitive employment tends to injure the home and to drag down wages still lower. When work is procured which a woman may do within her own home, the latter tendency is strengthened and the former but little diminished. It may even be increased. At times there has seemed to be a curious idea among charitable workers that the home was somehow preserved inviolate if only a woman could take back to it the work which should absorb her full time. The history of the sweating trades shows how this works out. Apart from the question of wages, it is evident that if a woman is

doing someone else's work she cannot be doing her own, and the mere fact that she does this stranger's work within the walls of her own tenement carries with it no sanctifying virtue. While she is busy with it the children must inevitably be neglected, or, worse still, pressed into service as additional workers at a pitifully early age. Child labor in the home presents one of the most difficult problems of the whole child labor question, since it is so difficult for officials either to discover or to prevent it. Yet whenever a woman takes home work at which a child may be made useful—and children can be pressed into a surprisingly wide range of activities—there is an immediate temptation to withdraw the children from school and to set them to work. On the whole, the only real advantage of a woman's taking work home seems to be that she may be more easily reached in case of any accident among the children requiring her immediate presence, and this possible benefit is offset by such serious disadvantages that a visitor may well hesitate before securing for her such work.

In families of the kind under consideration the children may and should be trained to feel a sense of responsibility, and to help in all suitable ways. Great care should be taken, however, that the need for their earnings is not allowed to overshadow their ultimate welfare. It is the visitor's special duty to see that they are not forced into premature employment, or into work unhealthful in its nature or demoralizing in its conditions.

In many of these families no satisfactory solution of the problem will be found until several of the children have reached a working age, when the income is likely to be increased by their earnings to an adequate figure.

Until that time comes, help will probably be required from time to time, but the visitor's energies should be devoted to making these occasions as few as may be, to helping the family to make the most of what they have, to discovering resources they had not thought of, and to helping them, as far as possible, to pass unharmed through the trying period of the lean years.

The whole subject of the standard of living attainable by the more poorly paid workers demands more careful consideration than it has yet received. It is only within a few years past that we have waked up to the fact that an able-bodied man's normal earning capacity may not be sufficient to support his family, and that without either intemperance, inefficiency or any other fault on the wage-earner's part, he may yet find himself with his wife and children living always on the border line of acute poverty, insufficiently nourished, lacking proper housing and clothing, unable to provide for the future and liable under any stress of illness, accident or lack of work to be forced into complete or partial dependence. The situation is an extremely difficult one to meet, because it is due to both individual and social causes, and while charity workers may do much to remove the personal defects or accidental circumstances which consign one particular workingman to the ranks of the poorly paid, they are as unable as the man himself to grapple singlehanded with the social causes which are forcing hundreds into those ranks. It is conceivable that society may at some future time be so ordered that every honest, sober and industrious man, not physically defective or incapacitated, may be able to earn a fair living for his family without forcing his wife or little children to enter the industrial field to help out the defi-

ciencies of his income, but that time is not yet very clearly discernible. Its coming will involve a considerable readjustment of the industrial system, which can be brought about, if it is ever accomplished, only by a union of many forces, acting on a basis of much wider information than we at present possess. And here the charity worker can render a double service: he can help the need of a specific family, and by studying its possible income, and the standard of living which can be maintained on that income, he may add to the fund of knowledge on which any effective remedial measures must eventually be based. One of the leaders in the effort to secure a living wage pleads for this individual study as one of the most hopeful means of finally bringing a normal standard of living within the reach of all:

"Finally, a definite concept of the minimum normal standard of living, together with an approximate estimate of the number of persons who fail to reach that standard, are indispensable to any intelligent and effective effort to ascertain and abolish the principal social cause of dependency. I refer, of course, to insufficient wages. Possessing this knowledge, the members of charity organizations, and all who speak or write on the problem of dependency, can accomplish a splendid work of education. They can bring home to well meaning but thoughtless employers some idea of the amount of poverty that is due to their failure to pay living wages: they can help very materially to bring upon employers who are not well meaning the condemnation of public opinion; they can contribute to the enactment of laws which directly or indirectly will enforce an adequate standard of compensation and of living; they can educate the whole public into a more adequate conception of the proportion of poverty which is due to social causes, and out of the complacent notion, which is still all too common, that the poverty stricken have only themselves to blame."[1]

[1] Rev. J. A. Ryan, N. C. C. C., 1907, p. 346.

CHAPTER XV

WIDOWS WITH CHILDREN

As has been said before, relief should never be used as a substitute for fair wages. Ordinarily when a family contains an able-bodied man, on whom the responsibility of its support should fall, philanthropy should not assume the burden. His inability to support it properly may be due to social causes for which he is not responsible, but the attempt to supplement his wages by alms-giving is sure to result disastrously for society as a whole. When, however, a family is without male support, and consequently in want, this objection does not hold, and frequently relief extending through a period of years is the only proper solution of the difficulty.

The most common instance calling for such treatment is the case of the widow or permanently deserted wife, left with children too small to help in the family support. It is obvious that she cannot alone discharge satisfactorily the duties which formerly occupied both her husband and herself. If she makes the family living she cannot administer the income as she did before. She cannot be both wage-earner and home-maker without neglecting one or the other of these functions. Generally she tries to fulfil both, with the result that neither is adequately accomplished, the children are ill-nourished and too often of necessity run wild, the mother is overtaxed and prematurely worn out, and charity must be asked again and again in every time of special stress.

To obviate these evils it is sometimes urged that when

a woman is left with a family of small children, her burden should be permanently lightened by removing several of the children, leaving with her only such a number as she can properly care for without being overworked. Ordinarily it is deemed best to limit the number left with her to two, unless she is a woman of unusual vigor of body and very anxious to keep her children with her. The children who are taken may be placed with relatives, if this can be managed, may be given up for adoption, or may be put into institutions. When this plan is followed it is best to arrange for their permanent care. As a rule nothing is gained by letting them be taken by neighbors or relatives who will undertake their charge for a short time, but who cannot provide for their future.

There are several objections to this disposition of the case. If the mother is a fit person to have the custody of her children, poverty is not a valid reason for taking them from her. An institution, no matter how good, is a poor place for a child. Even a very poor home offers a better chance for its development than an excellent institution. For the normal child, family life is the most important element in its training, and while it may secure this if placed in a home not its own, it cannot secure the mother care and mother love to which it has a right.

Sometimes when a woman is thus left, it is possible to find among her relatives or friends someone with whom she may advantageously join forces. She may have a single or a widowed and childless sister or cousin who will keep house for her, coming into the establishment simply as a member of the group, without any definite compensation from or to either side, turning into the common fund anything she may earn outside the

house. Sometimes some elderly woman will be glad to come in and act as caretaker for the sake of a home. These arrangements, however, are very apt to prove unsatisfactory unless they are undertaken on the initiative of the parties immediately concerned. It amounts so nearly to having two families under one roof that there are innumerable chances of discord, and the worker who, knowing some widow with young children and knowing also some single woman in much need of a home, brings the two together, will find it wise to be prepared for friction.

Where it is impossible to make any combination of this kind, one of two alternatives is often urged—either that the woman shall take work which she can do at home, or that she shall place the children in a day nursery and undertake regular employment without her home. Neither of these is an ideal solution of the situation, but of the two perhaps the former is the more objectionable.

In too many places "bringing home work" means entering the ranks of the sweated industries. The number of employments which can be carried on in a tenement home without special machinery and without trained oversight is limited, and nearly all have fallen into the hands of contractors who know how to diminish the returns to the worker to the lowest possible figure. One essential of trades thus carried on is that the work shall be capable of subdivision into the simplest forms of employment, each of which may be assigned to a different worker, who learns to do that one thing with great rapidity, but is unable to take up any other kind of industry. The simplicity of the work thus reduced to its elements, the consequent ease with which workers capable of doing it may be found among the newly

arrived immigrants, the lack of any training received by the worker which might enable her to turn to another trade, and the helplessness resulting from this lack of adaptability, all tend to make it possible for the employer to cut wages lower and lower, without any possibility of effective protest on the part of the employees. Accordingly we find that in these industries wages run down to incredibly low figures.

"The amount of pay received," reports one investigator of such trades, "varies with the kind of work from one and one-half cents an hour to ten cents—very rarely more. The little children, according to their ages, earn from fifty cents to two dollars a week."

In the last sentence the writer touches on one of the worst features of these so-called home industries—the ease with which they lend themselves, almost inevitably, to the premature employment of children. When a woman working with all her energy ten or twelve hours a day, is able to earn only from fifty cents to a dollar a day—and in many of the sweated trades she cannot average this—the income must be increased somehow, and the easiest way is to put the children to work. The mother may wish with all her heart to give them an education and a chance in life, but what is she to do? The rent must be paid and food and clothing provided. Her own labor is insufficient to meet the need; the children are at hand, and work, so simple and mechanical that even the littlest tots can do something, is waiting. Factory inspector and truant officer are not apt to penetrate to the home; there is no minimum age for beginning work there, and no restriction of hours of labor. And so in the place which should be his citadel of safety, the child is exposed to long hours of deaden-

ing, monotonous toil, unprotected by any of the safeguards which enlightened legislation throws around those employed in the world outside.

In smaller communities where the sweated trades are unknown, and taking work home usually means doing the washing or sewing for better off neighbors, many of the objections to bringing work into the house disappear. Then the principal matter to be considered is whether the mother is obliged to give so much of her time to this work that she must neglect her children, and whether the nature of the work involves unhealthy or dangerous conditions. Here again, however, the very fact of bringing work into the home constitutes a temptation to keep the older children out of school to help. The work which they will be set to is far less exacting and done under far better conditions than in the case of the industries above referred to, but it is not desirable that they should be withdrawn from school and deprived of that minimum of education which the state is supposed to ensure to every child. A visitor interested in a family in which the mother is thus supporting her children will do well to make friends with the school teachers of the little ones, and to rouse their interest in keeping the children in regular attendance.

The second plan mentioned, placing the children in a day nursery while the mother goes to work, is free from the special objections applying to the first plan. The children are well looked after, those who are old enough to be in school are sent there during school hours, and indirectly both mother and children may learn many things about the possibilities of cleanliness and of home-making. The principal question about this method, is whether it is really possible for the average

woman to support her children and make a home for them without either neglecting them or over-working herself to the point of exhaustion. The wages of working women are small at best, and the functions of bread-winner and home-maker are each in themselves sufficient to occupy a woman's time and strength. The effort to combine them not infrequently results disastrously.

The most satisfactory method, from the point of view of results, of dealing with a family thus left without its normal supporter, is to make the usual preliminary investigation, to find out what the necessary cost of living should be, what portion of this can be supplied by relatives or from any source on which there is a natural claim, what part the woman can make up herself without undertaking an unduly heavy task, and then to supply whatever deficiency may exist by an allowance paid with unfailing regularity at stated periods. It should be understood that when the oldest child reaches a working age this allowance or pension will be decreased by a certain amount, that an equal reduction will be made when the second child reaches this age, and so on, until by the time the family reaches a stage at which it should be self-supporting the pension will have stopped altogether.

In recent years there has been considerable discussion as to how this pension should be secured. Some workers strongly advocate that it should be provided from public funds, the state or the city bearing the whole burden. "It is the duty of the community to support its dependents," they argue, "and it is its interest to support them in the best way. It is far better and, in the end, cheaper, to pension the mother, thus permitting her to give her whole time and attention to training her

children to become good and useful citizens, than to escape the present cost of this method and later pay it tenfold in the maintenance of hospitals and reformatories and prisons. It is generally admitted that the pension system is the best way of providing for widows with children to care for; why should its cost be borne by private citizens when its benefits are enjoyed by the community as a whole? The widow who brings up her children successfully is rendering a distinct and valuable service to the state, and one which she cannot perform if her time and strength must go to making a living for them. Why should not the state recognize this service and pay her for it, as it would if she devoted herself to counting bills in the treasury department, or to scrubbing floors in the public buildings?"

Whatever force there may be in these arguments, they are at present academic rather than practical. No community furnishes such pensions from public funds, nor is there any strong likelihood that such a system will be adopted in the near future. It is true that many communities provide a certain amount of public outdoor relief for families in such a situation, but this is far from being an approximation to the system suggested. On the whole, it is probably fortunate that the community as a whole is not prepared to assume this responsibility. Such help given from public funds would be open to all the usual objections to outdoor relief, with one or two additional drawbacks peculiar to itself. For its successful administration the plan needs the flexibility, the adaptation to individual circumstances, the close knowledge of its beneficiaries and warm interest in their welfare which can better be obtained through private than through public charity. Theoretically it is desirable,

and practically it is necessary that the pension should be secured from private sources.

The advantage of the pension system is that it provides permanent and adequate relief without encouraging habits of dependence. The woman knows exactly what she has to rely on and for how long. She is not relieved from the duty of exerting herself, but is secured against the necessity of toil to the point of exhaustion, and the more wearing anxiety of never knowing from week to week whether income will equal outgo. She is not taught dependence, because the pension supplies only what she herself cannot provide, and is withdrawn in proportion as her family becomes able to meet its own needs. Moreover, it makes it practically certain that the visitor who provides or administers the pension will keep in close and friendly touch with the family, so that nothing is likely to go very far wrong with them without the difficulty becoming known and the trouble being checked in its incipiency.

Naturally such an arrangement must be carried out with firmness and discretion if the best results are to be secured. After the amount needed has been decided upon, additional help should not be given, except under the stress of very unusual misfortune. If the woman in whose behalf such a plan is undertaken is naturally inclined to be dependent and shiftless, she will certainly think that additional aid can and should be secured from the same source whenever she does not feel like living up to her part of the agreement. If she finds that by neglecting her work and so getting into want, or by spending recklessly and running herself into debt, she can secure whatever is needed to extricate her, she will probably continue to get into a long series of difficulties,

and the nominal agreement becomes a mere farce, covering an ill-regulated and injudicious bestowal of alms. But if her first experiment meets with no success and she is left to get herself out of the trouble she has brought upon herself, the probability is that it will not recur. Ordinarily, however, the pension plan is not likely to be attempted except with a woman of whose character the workers are sure, and in practice the problem discussed does not often arise.

A theoretical objection frequently brought against the pension method of relief is that it may, by freeing the average man from the fear of want for his family in case of his death, remove an incentive to thrift. This objection seems a trifle far-fetched. In many cases a working man's wages are such that, if he takes proper care of his family, it is not possible for him to make any provision against the future, and that duty is necessarily postponed until the older children reach an age at which they can add to the family income. Then, too, the difficulty of securing an adequate pension from private sources is so great that the system is not likely for some time to come to be sufficiently common to form a factor in the average man's calculations. Even were it otherwise, it is obvious that a family cannot be left to complete destitution for the sake of inculcating thrift in the fathers of other families. In some way or other widows and children must be aided. The question is not whether they shall be given help, but simply in what way the help shall be given, and this being so, the welfare of society as a whole and the future of the particular family are alike best served by providing relief in the most effective and permanently beneficial manner.

A very serious practical objection to the plan is found in the difficulty of providing such a pension. Many persons who are willing to give freely when they find a family in the stress of immediate want are entirely unwilling to undertake a systematic and continuous plan of assistance. It is always a troublesome task to secure adequate relief for a given case of want, and when this relief must be continued through a period of years the difficulty increases enormously. Often it will be found impossible to secure the amount needed. In that case, as in so many others, it is necessary to resort to other devices, recognizing that one is not doing the best thing, but only the best one can. Whatever help is decided upon, a strong effort should be made to give it regularly, that the family may know what they have to count on, and may not feel that they may fall back on an indefinite possibility of help in any emergency.

A visitor keeping in close and friendly touch with such a family may find numerous ways of helping both mother and children, especially as the latter grow old enough to become wage-earners. The usual tendency to set children to work at anything, no matter what, at which they can earn a few cents is of course intensified when the need for the few cents is urgent and unceasing. The mother's vision is too often limited to the returns, and her lack of knowledge of general conditions prevents her from seeing either the harmfulness of a given pursuit, or the greater results to be attained by deferring a little longer the earning period. On such matters the visitor's wider experience and greater breadth of view should be helpful. A family left in this position must inevitably go through a hard and anxious period while the children are young. The visitor must share these

anxieties to an extent which will make the work often painful as well as perplexing, but there are few situations in which advice and assistance will be more helpful, or sympathy and friendship more valued or productive of results for both sides.

CHAPTER XVI

CONCERNING CHILDREN

THROUGHOUT the preceding chapters a good deal has been said in regard to the children of poorer families, but the subject is of sufficient importance to justify more extended discussion. As a general rule, when, either through poverty or misconduct, a family is broken up, the public authorities are called upon to care for the children, so that the individual worker is not often confronted with the problem of providing for homeless children. Before, however, a family reaches the point of breaking up, much is often needed and much can be done for the children within their own home. Even when the parents are respectable and kindly intentioned people, they may through ignorance allow their children to suffer cruelly from disease or lack of attention, and in preventing such neglect a visitor may render an important service.

In a few cities a system of medical inspection of all school children has been established. Where this is not the case, the visitor should secure some information as to the symptoms of the commoner diseases from which children are apt to suffer. If a child is reported dull or troublesome in school, it is important to find out whether it is not suffering from defective sight or hearing, or from adenoid growths. Few people realize what serious results may arise from the lack of a little intelligent care in time. Every professional charity worker could tell of children who have lost sight or hearing for life

because the symptoms of disease were not recognized. Often a child will be backward at school, will be blamed and reprimanded, perhaps even punished, when as a matter of fact it is unable to see the exercises assigned or to explain what is its trouble. The teachers are frequently too overworked to give the individual attention necessary to find out what is the matter, the parents are unaware of the possibilities involved, and by the time the disease has gone so far that it announces itself unmistakably, the sight may be lost or damaged irrevocably. To discover troubles of this kind the visitor may easily secure simple tests for sight and hearing, and introduce these in the form of a game from time to time. In case of bad reports from school it will be safe, at least, to take the child to a dispensary or to the outpatient department of some hospital for examination.

The common diseases of childhood are easily recognized, but some of the more serious troubles may present themselves in a less apparent form. "I began my work among families," said one visitor, "by nearly letting a child die before my eyes because I didn't know the symptoms of Pott's disease of the spine. The child was failing steadily, but the local doctor said it was some common childish ailment for which he kept treating her, and I supposed he knew. For two years I was visiting the family and the child grew thinner and paler and feebler, till she was hardly able to move about, and then by mere accident I learned that severe pains in the abdomen might mean spinal trouble. I got her to a doctor who knew something, and then I went to him myself and asked for some indications of the diseases I might count on meeting. Now, if a child is ailing and I don't know what is the matter, I don't waste any time

thinking it isn't important; I get some good doctor to examine her and find out."

One line along which visitors in very poor families are apt to find sufficient work to be done is in seeing that the babies have a chance. The appalling death rate among the babies of the tenements, especially in the summer months, is largely due to entirely preventable diseases, but unfortunately the fight against such diseases requires both knowledge and means which are apt to be lacking among the poor. Money and science combined work wonders in the way of reducing infant mortality, and the visitor can do much in securing their advantages for the babies who too often are sacrificed to ignorance. Exactly what can be done depends largely on the particular place, as opportunities differ from city to city.

There is one highly disadvantageous condition which the visitor can probably do but little to modify. It is a well established fact that babies thrive best on their mother's milk, and that wherever mothers are engaged in occupations which prevent them from nursing their children, there is a high death rate among the little ones. Fall River, for instance, where a large proportion of the married women work in the mills, has an abnormally high death rate among babies under one year old—over four hundred to the thousand. In another way the same thing is shown by the fact that whenever any widespread cause, even though it be a calamity, sets women free from their outside occupations and enables them to nurse their babies, the infantile death rate falls. The siege of Paris and the cotton famine in the Lancashire mill districts during our own Civil War gave striking illustrations of this. In both cases there was widespread

and intense distress, but the mothers who could no longer follow their outside work, could nurse their babies, and the death rate of the little ones fell off noticeably. Ordinarily, however, mothers with little babies are not at work outside of their homes as a matter of choice, and the situation cannot be remedied by advice, however good. Occasionally mothers will be found who, although not hindered by any occupation, do not nurse their babies because they do not wish to, and then the most urgent remonstrance and persuasion should be exerted to induce them to change their attitude. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the breast-fed baby has an immensely better chance for life than the bottle-fed, and the woman who, being able to nurse her baby, refuses to do so, runs a serious risk of becoming responsible for its death.

Among the poor, however, it will more often be found that the refusal is not voluntary, and that the mother is not nursing her child because she is really unable to do so. It is pretty generally admitted that the ability to nurse their children is becoming less and less common among the women of today, in all ranks. Scientists are not agreed upon the cause of this phenomenon, but when it is found among the very poor, it is well worth while to enquire into the mother's dietary, and see if her inability is not closely connected with her own underfed condition. That this is by no means an impossible contingency is proved by the experience of the New York Milk Committee, which, during the summer of 1908, dealt with nearly a thousand babies in all stages of debility and disease—and saved nearly all of them. Among the exceedingly poor, they found that in many cases the mother failed to nurse the child

simply because she was too ill fed herself. One baby, for instance, was brought to them apparently at the point of death, so emaciated that the mother was not willing it should be weighed before the other women present.

"In the twelve weeks of his existence young Barry had been fed on almost everything except milk. The mother ate almost nothing herself. The husband, who was a laborer, had to eat because he worked. The older children had to eat, because they went to school. The baby ate the scraps. This left nothing much for the mother. That is the way with the poor, and it accounts for thousands of babies born only to die."

When the mother was furnished with proper food in sufficient quantities, the baby promptly began to improve, until by the end of the season's work he had reached a really creditable condition and had a reasonable chance of living out to the end the life which when he was first brought to the station had not seemed worth a week's purchase.

If the mother is really unable to nurse the baby, and it does not thrive on artificial feeding, the first step should be an investigation into the kind of milk it is getting. Milk is one of the most effective carriers of disease germs known, and the ordinary milk of commerce comes to the home literally teeming with possibilities of danger for the baby's delicate organism. The problem of infant mortality is, to a large extent, the problem of securing pure, clean milk:

"That impure and infected milk is one of the chief factors in the causation of excessive infant mortality is not questioned, so far as I am aware, by a single living authority. Whether we take Russia with its terrible death rate of 272 per thousand of infants under one

year old, Austria with its 227 per thousand, or New Zealand with its 82 per thousand, it is universally admitted that the frightful mortality among bottle-fed babies as compared with breast nurslings, is due largely to diarrhoeal diseases caused by impure and contaminated milk, or to other diseases caused by the ingestion of pathogenic bacilli contained in milk drawn from infected cows, or handled by infected persons."[1]

Milk can be produced which is to all practical intents free from bacteria, milk which is a marvel of purity and sweetness, but its price puts it beyond the reach of the poor, even if they know of its existence and where to get it. In some places, steps have been taken to see that such milk reaches the children who most need it. The pure milk depots in New York, maintained by Nathan Strauss, are perhaps the best known agencies of this kind. In some cities, the health authorities undertake to see that no milk under a certain moderate standard of purity shall be sold. In others, elaborate campaigns are carried on, not only to provide pure milk, but to see that where small babies are concerned, the milk furnished shall be exactly what that particular infant needs;—for it frequently happens with a young baby that milk, no matter how pure, must be modified to suit its individual constitution.

In over twenty cities campaigns of this kind have been undertaken, and the number is increasing with each summer. Details differ from place to place, but in the main the work done by the New York Milk Committee, which was organized in 1908 to grapple with the infantile death rate of the tenement districts through the summer months, is typical of all. Milk depots are

[1] Spargo, The Common Sense of the Milk Question, p. 158.

opened in regions where infant mortality is likely to be greatest, and milk of the purest quality provided. This is sold at cost to those who can pay the price, below cost to those who cannot, or given to those who cannot pay anything. Older babies and young children flourish on this milk, but for the very young babies, and babies who are already ill, various modifications are required, so doctors are secured, and a staff of trained nurses. Each baby is examined, when the application for milk is first made, by the doctor, who prescribes for it such a modification of the milk as will best suit that particular baby. Further, he gives the mother such instruction as she seems to need about the feeding and general care of the child. To make sure that these instructions are understood and followed, the trained nurses, who act as the doctor's assistants, and preside over the distribution of the milk, visit each family and make sure that the child is not suffering from the parents' mistaken ideas of hygiene. The baby is weighed weekly, and if it does not show a satisfactory gain, the doctor is called upon to examine and prescribe again. Often, the plan includes a weekly or monthly meeting of the mothers, when the doctor addresses them, giving elementary instruction in personal and infant hygiene, and quite informally the nurses are giving such instruction all the time as the mothers come for their milk, or crowd around to see their babies weighed and compare notes as to improvement. Provision of pure, clean milk, modified according to a doctor's prescription to suit the individual baby, home supervision by trained nurses, and regular consultations or classes at which the doctor or nurse meets the mothers as a group and discusses the principles of hygiene of most importance to them—these

are the leading features of the plan wherever tried. Sometimes the work is carried on by private philanthropy, sometimes by the municipality, sometimes by a combination of forces, but wherever it has been tried, the results have been striking. Deaths among young babies have fallen off, and the general level of health has risen. Incidentally, what the mothers learn benefits the whole family, and the city which has once tried such a plan will usually not be willing to drop it.

In any city where such work is carried on, the visitor interested in a sickly baby need only learn the location of the nearest milk depot and make sure that the mother carries the child there. Where, however, there is no such work, it is by no means easy to ensure the little one a reasonable chance for existence. Generally, however, it will be found that there is purer milk to be had than the children of the tenement habitually get. It may be known as certified milk, or babies' milk, or by some other name indicating its higher grade, and it is sold at a correspondingly higher price. If a bottle-fed baby is not thriving, the best course is to consult a doctor and make sure what modification of milk is needed for it, and then to see that this is supplied. If this cannot be done, the next best thing is to secure the higher grade milk, even unmodified, and see if it will not meet the difficulty. If the parents cannot pay the higher price, the difference should be made up for them, just as medicine would be supplied if they could not buy it when the baby was acutely ill.

If pure milk is not to be had, or if money to pay for it cannot be raised, the visitor has comparatively little chance to be of service. One thing, however, should always be looked to when a bottle-fed baby is not thriv-

ing: the nursing bottle should be examined. There is a certain kind of nursing bottle in high favor among some of the foreign mothers, in which the baby sucks the milk through a long, slender rubber tube. This particular form of bottle, or rather, of nipple, is simply murderous. It is difficult to keep sweet, under the best of circumstances, and among the ignorant mothers, who chiefly make use of it, it is practically never really cleaned. It is the finest imaginable breeding ground for bacilli of every sort, and wherever the visitor finds it in use, trouble may be looked for. In addition to making sure that no such objectionable contrivances are in use, the visitor may also find that a little instruction may not come amiss in the art of pasteurizing milk, of keeping it as uncontaminated as possible under the conditions of a tenement home, and of keeping the baby's bottles clean and sweet. A few suggestions as to regularity of feeding may perhaps bear fruit, and a protest against the too common practice of sharing the family bill of fare with babies of tender years may do good. It is not well, however, to go much beyond such elementary principles without consulting a doctor, and one of a visitor's most important services may be the insistance upon medical advice at an early stage if the baby shows symptoms of illness which do not yield at once to simple treatment.

In cases in which a child's physical welfare is cared for by the parents to the extent of their ability a visitor may nevertheless be of service by suggesting possibilities which lie without the range of their knowledge. Among the more self-respecting poor there is sometimes much ignorance of the work done in the way of summer outings, vacation schools, holiday houses and the like. People of this class are not likely to follow up such

chances for their children to get a change and opportunities of beneficial enjoyment, and they are sometimes even disposed to refuse to let the children take advantage of them when presented, fearing that they are tinged with patronage, or that accepting means giving up the independence they have struggled so proudly to maintain. A little tact and common sense on the visitor's part will often overcome this objection. The visitor may also find occasion for introducing the children to the public buildings of the city, and letting them know what resources they have at hand in the way of public libraries, picture galleries, museums, and so on. The very people to whom these would be of most benefit are frequently unaware of their existence. Through the children the whole family may become interested, but even if this does not follow, the work is well worth doing for the sake of the children alone.

In families in which the parents are intemperate or of dubious morality the visitor's task is likely to be more delicate and more serious. It is a general and good principle that when the surroundings of a home are injurious morally, the law should be invoked and the children removed. Like many other good principles this is difficult of realization. A visitor may be certain that a home is gravely injurious to a child morally, yet be unable to secure the legal evidence which would justify forcible interference.

Ordinarily the ground on which action for the removal of children can be taken is the evidence of neighbors or the statements of police officers. Neighbors are exceedingly unwilling to go into court in such cases. They may assure the visitor of the existence of immoral conditions and urge the removal of the children, but

they will not carry their interest to the point of incurring a neighbor's hostility by appearing openly against him. In some cases the evidence of the police will be found most helpful; in others, the police themselves are not above suspicion, and may have personal reasons for not seeing anything wrong in the conduct of a given household. Consequently, the visitor may find that legal steps cannot be taken, although there may be no doubt that the children are suffering.

In such a case, besides exerting such indirect influence as may be possible to improve home conditions, the best thing the visitor can do is to undertake the rôle of truant officer, and see that those particular children are kept steadily at school. This will often be a task of considerable difficulty, as parents of such a kind are almost certain to interpose every obstacle they can devise. As they are not hampered by any regard for truth, their excuses will be many and varied, and it will tax the visitor's patience and resolution to see that the children really attend with a fair degree of regularity. The best plan is to see the teacher, explain the situation and enlist her coöperation. Usually this will be given cordially, and through it the task may be successfully accomplished.

This may seem an entirely inadequate remedy. In point of fact, it is not a remedy; it is merely a palliative, to be adopted when a remedy is impracticable. Still, it has several good points. 1 In the first place it gives the children the best chance they are likely to have of coming into contact with respectable people and learning something of their standards of life. 2 It obliges the parents to give the children decent clothing and a certain amount of care. 3 Further, since the children are

likely to talk of what goes on at home and since this may lead to fuller investigations than the parents desire, it exercises a restraining influence on them. Finally, it not only gives the children the educational training and the drill in regularity and responsibility which they so entirely lack at home, but by interesting in them their teachers and others gives them just so many more opportunities of obtaining helpful, friendly influences, of which they are likely to need all they can get.

In cases of physical neglect or cruelty, there is likely to be less difficulty in securing the evidence necessary to justify legal interference. There is a pretty generally diffused sentiment against the abuse of childhood in these more definite and perceptible forms which will prompt the neighbors to testify, and the child's condition itself will bear witness. It is usually best to undertake any legal action through the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, or some similar association.

There are some differences from state to state in the legal definition of what constitutes punishable abuse of a child, and the worker will do well to secure information as to local legislation. Ordinarily, cruelty, failure to provide food or shelter, taking or sending a child out to beg, and subjecting it to immoral influences or associations, are grounds for action. A knowledge of when and how the law may be invoked and what will be the consequences of calling upon it will often enable a visitor to restrain a parent from injurious treatment of a child, especially in cases where the parent is using the child for purposes of beggary.

When both parents are intemperate or immoral, the problem of what should be done is a simple one, but

when one is vicious and the other excellent, situations sometimes arise in which it is hard to decide on any satisfactory course of action. In such a case the parent of good character not only has the right to make the decision, but by far the best results are likely to be reached by consultation with him or her. The visitor should have the more accurate knowledge of what the law is in the matter, and what arrangements may be made afterward if the law is invoked; the parent has the keener interest in the child's welfare, the closer knowledge of its disposition, and the ability to judge better how it would adapt itself to these possible arrangements. Both sides should be represented.

Sometimes on account of poverty or home conditions, it may become advisable to remove one child, leaving the others under the mother's care. Quite frequently, long before a boy or girl reaches an age permitting it to leave school and go to work, it is possible to find some family who will take it, giving it a home, clothing it and sending it to school, in return for what help it can give in the way of chores and housework. Such an arrangement may be of great advantage to the child, if proper care is exercised in placing it. The difficulty is that unscrupulous persons are likely to make an offer of this kind, and then, having secured the child, proceed to make a drudge of it, cutting short its school time and seriously overworking it. In any case in which a child is removed from its own family and placed with strangers a heavy responsibility is incurred, and the visitor should not only be very sure beforehand of the character of the family with which it is placed, but should make a point of keeping in touch with it,

seeing it frequently and making sure that the change is really for its advantage.

In cases of this kind, in which a child is removed from its parents on account of their poverty, it may be well that the whole arrangement should be entirely informal. When, however, a child is taken on account of the parents' objectionable moral character, or because through intemperance or shiftlessness they are unable to care for it, the matter should go through the courts, and its legal guardianship should be definitely assigned. If this is not done, as soon as the child reaches a wage-earning age the parents are likely to assert their claims, and will often remove it from entirely satisfactory surroundings, forcing it to live with them at the sacrifice of its future welfare, merely for the sake of securing its earnings.

In the cases referred to above, in which the child is removed at the request of one parent in order to protect it from the influence of the other, whether or not it is necessary to take the matter into the courts will depend somewhat upon which parent is blamable. If the mother is at fault, the father's legal control of the child in most places is sufficient to make unnecessary any assignment of its guardianship; it must be remembered, though, even in this case, that in the event of the father's death the mother may make trouble if the guardianship has not been assigned to some other person. When, however, the father is at fault, the fact that in most states the mother has no inherent legal right to the custody of the child renders it important to take the matter into court and have the guardianship definitely assigned to some one other than the father. It goes without saying that legal advice should be taken in all such cases.

Another matter in which a visitor may be of much use arises as soon as the question comes up of putting the children of the family to work. In the present state of our child labor legislation this question is sure to arise very promptly when a family finds itself in want. It hardly seems necessary to reiterate that a visitor should never permit any evasion of the child labor laws, no matter what the circumstances of a given family. If the small sum a child under school age can earn is really badly needed, and if it is impossible for the need to be met through the efforts of the older members of the family or from any of the natural sources of relief, then charity should be called upon to make up the deficiency. For the sake of the future welfare of the child and of the community alike the years of childhood should be protected. Yet workers among the poor often show a curious obtuseness on this point.

"It wasn't long after I came to this place," said one professional worker, "that a gentleman called at the office one day and asked me to visit the Richsons and give him some advice about them. He had been helping until he had grown discouraged, and wanted to know whether anything effective could be done. I found that the family had quite a record. Mr. Richson wasn't very strong, and at first had really lost one position after another through attacks of illness. Help had been given freely and both he and his wife had come to feel that it was easier to ask for food and clothes than to work for them. The man was in fairly good health at that time, quite able to do ordinary work, and the woman was robust and vigorous. There were three children, the oldest a boy, who was busy with paper and pencil at the time of my first call. I stopped to admire

his work, which was a picture of a locomotive, remarkably well done.

"'Oh, Herbert's awful good at drawing,' said his mother, 'and he's awful fond of machinery. There ain't anything about an engine or a steamboat he can't draw, and if I'd let him he'd always be around the machine shops.'

"I came to the conclusion that there was no earthly reason for giving help to that family. Work ought to be provided, and aid withheld, under which conditions they would undoubtedly prove abundantly able to support themselves. I reported this to the gentleman who referred them.

"'That's just what I thought,' he exclaimed, wrathfully; 'they've been working me and I'm tired of it. Well, I've got a place for that boy, and if they don't send him to work I'll not do a thing for them. They've got to brace up and help themselves a bit.'

"'Do you mean you want Herbert to go to work?' I exclaimed. 'Why, the boy isn't twelve yet. He ought to be in school for two years to come.'

"'I've got a permit for him,' answered the benevolent individual, 'and I've found a place in the messenger service. It's better for him to work than for his father and mother to be begging the way they're doing now. I'm disgusted with them.'

"And my representations were useless. The state was one of those benighted ones where a child could be excused from school attendance on the representation by reliable people that his parents were unable to support their family without his earnings, and my benevolent visitor, who was one of the leading lights of the community, had unhesitatingly declared that this was the

situation with the Richsons. So Herbert was taken from school and put to work on the night shift at the age of eleven years and eight months, in order to train his parents in self-reliance."

"What became of the boy?" asked a listener.

"I don't like to think about that," said the worker, "though it's a common story enough. You know what the irregular life of the messenger boys is, and how often it leads to moral injury. It did with Herbert. He was exposed to all sorts of temptations and was too young to withstand them. One thing followed another, and at last he was brought into court for stealing money from a package entrusted to him. It wasn't the first time he had appropriated parcels or parts of their contents, and the judge felt it necessary to make an example of him. He was sent out to the reformatory for minority. As I listened to the judge, I couldn't quite make up my mind which most deserved that sentence, the parents, or the charitable man who had driven the boy into temptation because he believed the father and mother were lazy and worthless. I should have taken most satisfaction myself in seeing it executed against the man."

Probably there are very few dispensers of relief who would so recklessly ignore the rights of the child, but there are many good and kind people who in a less degree fail to realize the importance of throwing the burden of a family's support on the elder members, rather than on the children. Sometimes these are people who began to work very early in their own childhood, and who honestly believe that this is the best possible training for any child. They forget the great change which has come over the conditions of industry within

the last forty or fifty years. Work is far more subdivided, and hence is of much less educational value; it is carried on under a far greater nervous strain, often under less healthful conditions, gives little chance for advancement, and tends far more to become a deadening routine. Lucy Larcom might enter the mills at eleven years old without injury, but were she a girl of the same age today it would be as impossible for her to repeat that experience as to bring back the stage coach to take the place of the railroad, or to substitute sailing vessels for steamships.

But the visitor should not only see that children are not put to work too early; the choice of the work to which they shall be put is a hardly less important matter. There is a tendency to put them into the first thing at which they can earn a few cents, regardless of whether this offers opportunities for training, or whether it is healthful work, or what will be its influence on the child's character and habits, or whether there is anything else for which the child has a special aptitude. It has been estimated that half the genius of the world is lost to the world because those on whom it is bestowed are forced through poverty to take up work for which they are unfitted, at which they can never be anything but inferior workers, but which will bring them immediate returns. Naturally, one will encounter few children who have a genius for anything, but when one is found with a marked aptitude in any direction, it may be well worth while to see that opportunity is given for cultivating it.

Before a child leaves school the visitor should be on the watch to keep it, if possible, from any of the so-called street trades, such as selling papers, peddling

matches, blacking shoes, and so on. There seems no room for doubt that the influence of these trades is bad for the child, physically and morally. The hours are irregular and frequently extend far into the night; the associations are of the worst; the uncertainty of the returns helps to develop the gambler's spirit; the exposure is often cruel in its severity; and the earnings are pitifully disproportioned to the cost at which they are gained. Wherever the subject has been investigated, it has been found that a very large proportion of the children sentenced to reformatory and correctional institutions come from the street trades.

The messenger service, even when the boys entering it have reached the legal age for going to work, is equally objectionable, with some added disadvantages of its own. Prominent among these is the constant temptation to dishonesty, not only in the form of direct theft, but in overcharging for the delivery of the message or parcel, a bit of sharp practice rendered easy by the ignorance of many people as to the proper charge. "A judge told the writer that one-third of all the delinquent boys brought before him had, at one time or another, served the public as messenger boys. He regarded this as the most injurious, from the point of view of morals, of all the occupations open to children."

Another serious danger involved in the messenger and telegraph delivery service, lies in the character of the places to which the boys are often sent. One worker tells of her experience in trying to locate a runaway girl. She had some reason to think the girl might be in a certain disreputable house in a neighboring city. She went to the city and wishing to get a message to the girl, sent for a messenger, asking that

she should have as old a boy as they could send her. A boy of fourteen was supplied. Reluctantly, she sent him to the place described to her. The girl was not there, and not wishing to give up the search the worker took counsel with the boy. He entered most cordially into the effort, and spent the day trying one place after another. He was acquainted with all the houses of bad reputation in the city, knew the distinguishing characteristics of the patrons of each, and was acquainted with many of the inmates. His help was of the greatest value in the search, which was finally successful, but it opened one worker's eyes as to what kind of training the messenger service gives adolescent boys.

Apart from these objections, both the street trades and the messenger service have the great disadvantage of giving no preparation for the future. Mrs. Florence Kelley, whose long experience among working children gives peculiar force to her words, puts the matter concisely:

"Let us assume that in spite of all its disadvantages, some rare boy survived a long term of employment in the telegraph and messenger service and emerged with digestion unhurt by irregular meals and coffee drinking; nerves sound in spite of lost sleep and cigarette smoking; character untained by evil companionship and the overwhelming temptation to dishonesty. What has such a boy to show for the years he has spent in delivering messages? He has no trade, no craft, no skill of any kind, no discipline of mind or body to fit him for rising in any direction. The irregularity of his work has unfitted him for any sustained effort when he has passed the age for accepting children's wages. One of the problems of the settlement is to find work for boys who have outgrown the messenger's uniform. The lads have learned nothing which is of any value to them.

There is no versatility in them which might make them desirable employees in the hobble-de-hoy age. Their eagerness to make a record of speed and promptness has all oozed away. They are no longer dazzled at the prospect of earning $4.00 a week. They know most exactly the purchasing power of the wages they are likely to receive, and balancing the fatigue and exertion against the pay, they simply sit still and wait for something to turn up, rather better pleased if nothing can be found for them to do. Not every boy is morally ruined by this work; but the earlier he enters upon it, and the longer he remains in it, the greater the probability of his ruin."[1]

It may seem that it is a rather serious problem to help a child to employment, when there are such dangers in the common forms of industry, but so indeed it is, and the sooner this is recognized, the better the chance for the children. In the individual case, the matter will be much simplified if the child has a strong inclination for any particular line. If it has not, then every effort should be made to place it where the conditions of work are not unhealthful nor morally dangerous, and where it will have a chance to rise, receiving in each place training which will help it on to the next grade. To find such an opening is not always easy. All the methods mentioned in the discussion of finding work for men may be brought into play, and in addition it will often be found that some boys' club or other similar organization can give valuable aid.

One objection is sometimes made when such careful effort is urged for securing a good opportunity for the child. "That's all very well for the individual case," some will say, "but it can't be applied at all generally.

[1] Some Ethical Gains through Legislation, p. 22.

Not everybody can be successful. There must always be those to do the rough and poorly paid work of the world, and you only make them dissatisfied with the inevitable by all this talk of raising them above that station."

There is a modicum of truth in this. Undoubtedly there will always be a residuum who are unfitted for the more intelligent and interesting work of the world; but there is no reason why that residuum should not be reduced to its lowest terms. Moreover, as philanthropic workers we deal with individuals, not with classes, and there is every reason why we should strive to give the individual child in whom we are interested the best possible opportunity. The nature of the opportunity will vary with the character and intelligence of the child. Not every one can be prepared for the higher work; there will always be hewers of wood and drawers of water. But if any given child has the ability which would fit him for higher work it is well for him and well for the community that that ability should be developed; and if he has not, if he must be one of the lower ranks of workers, it is at least well that he should be a healthful, well developed and morally sound wood hewer or water drawer.

As has been said before, when a family is broken up the authorities usually take the responsibility of deciding the children's destiny. When, however, persons in whom a visitor has been interested die, leaving children, interest in the family naturally does not stop with the parent's death, and the visitor may thus be confronted with the problem of disposing of a group of dependent children. If relatives are willing and able to take them, the matter settles itself, always

supposing the relatives are suitable people to have charge of them. If no such disposition is possible, the choice usually lies between putting the children into some institution and finding places for them in private families.

It is a pretty generally accepted principle that institutions are, while sometimes necessary, always an evil. Institution children lack initiative and self-reliance; they are accustomed to act by invariable rules, usually at the word of command. They get none of the give and take of daily life, none of the hourly unconscious training in adaptability and self-dependence which the normal environment of a child supplies. They are at a loss when they are passed out from the institution and find themselves no longer under guidance, subjected to the fierce competition of which they have had no inkling. For these reasons in many places the institution is being used only as a receiving station, from which the children are placed in private families, under public supervision, as rapidly as places can be found for them. In other communities, in which this placing-out system is deemed impracticable, the huge institution building is being replaced by numerous small buildings or cottages in which little groups of boys or girls live as nearly as possible a family life.

On the other hand, unless there is some state placing-out system, or unless some large private society undertakes this form of work, it is difficult to secure proper supervision for the child placed in a private family. Ordinarily the visitor will not have either time or opportunity to select a suitable home and afterward to keep the close watch required over the child's surroundings and treatment. Generally it is the best plan to let the

child be taken in charge by the authorities and placed by them, after which the visitor may well follow it up with a friendly interest which may grow into a lifelong friendship on both sides.

CHAPTER XVII

CARE OF THE AGED

THERE is a general and entirely justifiable feeling on the part of most relief societies and private givers that children are the all-important consideration. It is among them that constructive work can be done most hopefully. Work among adults is apt to be at best alleviative; they have had their chance or they have been deprived of it; in either case their characters are relatively fixed, and efforts to change them are slow and uncertain in their results. But the children are plastic, and work done among them today is preventive of a hundred ills tomorrow. It is natural and right that emphasis should be placed on helping them and the families in which they are found; but this discrimination frequently leaves the aged in a pitiable situation.

There are few more pathetic figures than that of the elderly woman who for one reason or another has not been able to make sufficient provision against old age, who finds her earning ability constantly decreasing or entirely gone, whose savings are diminishing and who sees the dreaded shadow of the almshouse drawing nearer and nearer. The case of elderly married people is perhaps even harder, for they must face not only the going to the poorhouse, a fate from which the respectable poor shrink with a horror scarcely to be realized by the well-to-do, but frequently the added pang of separation, since in most institutions the sexes are kept apart, with the exception of an hour or two once a week when husband and wife are permitted to see each other.

Ordinarily the charitable worker will find it difficult to secure sufficient help for the aged outside of institutions. Apart from the feeling that their funds should be used where children will be benefited, relief societies do not like to assume a responsibility from which it is painful and embarrassing to withdraw, and which may continue for years. As a consequence it will usually be found necessary to get help for such cases either from public funds, which generally involves the applicant's entering an institution, from relatives and former employers and friends, or from benevolent individuals. The course of action required will differ both in accordance with the partial or complete inability of the applicant to care for himself, and with his previous character and record.

Elderly single persons may often have to apply for help before their earning capacity is exhausted. They may be no longer able to maintain themselves under the stress of competitive conditions, but nevertheless be capable of rendering good service for years longer, if these conditions are somewhat modified for their benefit. A woman who could not take an ordinary place at service may be welcomed in some household where the mother is obliged to go out to work, in which she can look after the children, help along with all but the heaviest tasks, prepare the lunches to be sent to the mill or factory and have the cup of hot tea ready for the workers' return. Often some unattached elderly woman entering a family in this capacity makes herself really one of it, and secures not only a shelter but a home until her death. Occasionally some elderly woman who does not wish to enter a family will vary this method by going out for the day to take care of children while

their mother is at work, or by coming in for a few hours to help in the house work. Her remuneration will be very small, but elderly women learn to diminish their expenses almost incredibly.

Such an arrangement as either of these is better made by the persons immediately concerned than through a charitable worker. The latter can occasionally fit a woman into a household to the advantage of both sides, but there is a strong tendency, when this is done, for both parties to view the arrangement with suspicion, and to be ready for a disagreement on very slight occasion. If, on the other hand, the applicant can remember any acquaintance or friend with whom she might thus find a home, it is well to leave the planning entirely to her, standing ready, if necessary, to make any small addition needed to her future income. Sometimes, when the applicant is hardly capable of sufficient work to enter into such an arrangement on a business footing, she can find some family who for the sake of old acquaintanceship will take her in if she can provide her own clothes, or pay some very small sum into the family treasury. When this can be done, it is well to make up the amount needed from whatever source is possible, as it is not only the cheapest way of securing continuous care for the woman, but is likely to result in far more satisfaction to her than would much more elaborate and scientifically commendable care bestowed upon her in an institution.

Here, as in all other cases, such an arrangement should be undertaken only after careful investigation. Sometimes an elderly person is an invaluable adjunct to a family which wishes to live by fraud or beggary, and the worker must be sure that an apparent offer of a

home does not cover a real purpose to use the applicant in some unjustifiable capacity.

"When I first became interested in philanthropic work," said one visitor, "I had a call from an old woman who wanted a little help. She was too old to work, but she had been living for years with a family who had given her a home without question of charge. They had had hard luck and were scarcely able to keep her, but didn't want to turn her out. Someone had promised to give her a quarter each week; if I would only do the same, this half dollar would make all the difference to her friends, who thought her food wouldn't cost much more than that. She came to me because she had once worked for a friend of mine in another city, and had heard me spoken of there.

"Well, I investigated. I wrote to the friend, who remembered that a woman of that name had worked for them twenty years before; she didn't recollect her very well, but thought she was all right. I also called on the family with whom old Margaret was staying. It wasn't till long afterward that I remembered I had told Margaret when I would come. I was immensely pleased with the cleanliness of the bare room in which I was received. I didn't altogether like the looks of the friends, but they talked so reasonably that I overlooked that. Yes, they thought the world of Margaret; they wouldn't turn her out, whatever happened, but I could see for myself they weren't in a position to give her food and clothes. Whatever I gave her would be hers, to be spent by her as she thought best. Of course, if I chose to give Margaret food sometimes, it would help out the scanty supply they could furnish. So I gave her a little sum regularly, and as she usually brought a basket with

her, it was natural to put in some food and to hand her any clothes I was done with and thought she could turn to account.

"It was quite by accident that I happened more than a year later to be passing the tenement where she lived rather late one Saturday evening, and heard sounds of a drunken quarrel within. An officer was near by and I walked over to him. 'I wonder,' I said, 'if you wouldn't go in there with me? I know an old woman who lives there, and I'm afraid she'll be frightened, if not hurt.'

"The officer looked at me doubtfully. 'Do you mean old Margaret,' he asked, 'the old woman with white hair, who goes around with a basket?'

"'Yes,' I answered.

"'Well, now lady,' he said, 'I wouldn't go in there if I was you. Margaret always gets full Saturday night, and I guess she's making most of that row herself. You needn't worry about her getting hurt. There ain't many can scrap better than she can.'

"My first impulse was to deny it indignantly, but the officer didn't look like a sympathetic man, and I concluded to leave. The next day, though, I made a few calls, and found that he was right. Margaret was the main support of that family—a family containing two able-bodied men. 'She brings in a basket full of stuff every day,' said my informants, 'and nobody knows how much money. They sell what they don't eat, or trade it off for liquor. They're all a drunken set, and grandma —that's what everybody calls her around here—can do her part with any of them when it comes to drinking.'

"Naturally, I stopped my contributions, but I hadn't the moral courage to appear against Margaret in court,

and I imagine none of her other dupes had, either, for I haven't heard of her coming to grief yet."

For elderly men there is a wider range of possible usefulness than for elderly women, varying considerably with local conditions. Odd jobbing of various sorts, tending fruit or paper stands, all forms of work not demanding full physical vigor and quickness of thought, besides many special kinds of occupations, may be found by searching. Sometimes it may be well to transfer such a man from one locality to another, where the labor market is less crowded, or where less strenuous competition prevails. In this case, of course, due care should be exercised to make sure that he will be really and permanently benefited by the change.

If the applicant, whether married, single or widowed, is obviously incapable of self-support, a careful estimate should be made of what is required to supplement his earnings, or to meet his needs, if he can do nothing, and relatives should then be sought with a view to securing from them what is lacking. If the applicant is a single person, it may be entirely possible for some relative to give a home. In the case of an elderly couple this is less often possible. Too frequently the relatives will disclaim all responsibility. In New York children capable of contributing to their parents' support are required to do so, but in most places they have no legal liability of this kind. Moral suasion is then the only means which can be used to induce them to undertake the responsibility. Sometimes, when no relative is able to do much, it may yet be possible to secure the amount needed by inducing each to give some small sum regularly. In these cases, the question of collecting these various contributions, which will usually be paid weekly or monthly, becomes important. Unless the visitor can

do it in person, or provide some collector, the plan is apt to fall to pieces within a very short time.

If sufficient help to keep them in comfort cannot be secured from relatives, further action should be determined by the character and antecedents of the old persons concerned. If they have been intemperate, lazy and thriftless all their lives, it is hardly worth while to make a further effort to provide for them outside of the almshouse. They will receive there what is needed to keep them in reasonable physical comfort; ordinarily they will be kindly treated, and the associations will not be unaccustomed or distressing to them. If, on the other hand, they are respectable, hard-working people who have been reduced to want through ill health, misfortune or the fault of others, every means should be used to care for them adequately outside of the public institutions.

In most places there are homes both for elderly men and elderly women, in which single or widowed people may be received. Sometimes an admission fee is charged. Sometimes they are free to all possessing certain qualifications in the way of settlement or church membership or affiliations of some other kind. Usually a person admitted to one of these homes is provided for until death, so that it is well worth while to make an effort to raise the necessary fees. In doing this all natural sources of aid, such as relatives, friends, former employers, church connections, etc., should be applied to before strangers are approached. If the applicant has ever belonged to a benevolent or fraternal order, even though his membership has lapsed, it is worth while to make an application there; for the sake of old times something may be done.

When all these natural agencies have been canvassed without securing the amount needed, recourse should be had to various outside sources. Occasionally some church circle or group of King's Daughters may be interested in the effort to raise the necessary sum, and valuable aid secured through them. Sometimes application may be made with good effect to some wealthy person, ignorant of this particular case, but interested in charitable work in general. In some cities it is not unusual to advertise such cases in the public papers, stating the amount required and acknowledging with equal publicity all contributions received. The difficulty with this method is that if successful it is likely to be widely followed. An advertisement inserted by some careful worker who has full knowledge of the case under consideration, and who has prepared the notice with due care to preserve the applicant's privacy and to avoid injury to his self-respect, may give the idea to a host of careless and superficial workers who will disregard these proper precautions altogether. The harm done by injudicious newspaper appeals is so great that unless the custom has been established under suitable safeguards in any given place, it is of doubtful wisdom to introduce it.

The worker will almost certainly encounter, sooner or later, occasional elderly men or women who, while honest and self-respecting, and in want through no fault of their own, are too quarrelsome, too "cranky," or perhaps too mischief-making, to get on with any one. Relatives might be willing to give a home, but have found by experience that the results are unfortunate for all concerned. In such cases there is seldom any resource but the almshouse. The same qualities which

make them unwelcome in a private home are likely to make so much trouble in a Home for the Aged that their stay is usually short, even if admission can be gained for them. Sometimes private givers can be found who will bear with all their unreason, and continue to care for them in spite of it, but such givers are rare. Ordinarily, effort spent in trying to arrange for their care outside of a public institution is futile.

In the case of an elderly couple it is not usually possible to gain for them admission to any Home where they may remain together. There are a few such places, but ordinarily entrance into a Home or an institution means a practical divorce for people who have perhaps lived together for more than half a century and against whom no fault can be urged but poverty. This is such a hardship that every effort should be put forth to secure for them a pension which will sustain them comfortably in their own home, together. This will often be a difficult matter, but it is a kind of work which, if successful, brings large returns in the way of satisfaction. Its benefits are obvious, and, since the character of the old people is already definitely fixed, there is no disturbing doubt as to the wisdom of giving help as freely as it can be obtained, no fear of sapping independence, no danger that while relieving physical hardships one is creating moral ills.

CHAPTER XVIII

SPECIAL CASES: FEEBLE-MINDEDNESS, ETC.

WHILE dealing with normal families, the worker is sure to come across a number of abnormal individuals, for whom special treatment is necessary. The feeble-minded, the epileptic, the insane, sufferers from tuberculosis in various forms, the maimed, the halt and the blind—all or any of these may be found, and for all the visitor must seek some method of cure or alleviation.

What can be done in any given case depends largely upon the community. In some states the care of the poor has been specialized, and for each class of unfortunates, institutions are provided in which they may receive the particular kind of care and training needed to fit them for normal life, or, if that is impossible, to render them as happy and as useful as their infirmity permits. In other places the almshouse is still the catch-all, to which every dependent is sent regardless of the causes of his dependency, of the possibility of its removal, or of the effect either upon him or his companions of placing him under institutional conditions determined without reference to his needs.

In some states in which this haphazard method prevails, the authorities recognize its inadequacy to the extent of trying to secure better conditions at least for children of school age, whom they will send to institutions adapted to their needs in other more advanced states. In such cases the home state usually pays the child's board at the institution in question, but fre-

quently will not take any further responsibility, leaving the cost of clothing and transportation to be met by the parents or by private charity.

What care the state provides for unfortunates of any particular class may usually be learned by enquiry at any charity organization society, if one exists. Where there is none, the city directory may prove useful. Twenty-eight states have centralized the direction of their charities. In these, any city directory is apt to give, under some such heading as "State Government," the names and addresses of those composing the central body, known variously as "State Board of Charities," "Board of Control," "State Board of Supervisors," etc. An application to any member of these boards will usually bring either full information, or a statement as to where and how it may be obtained. The overseer of the poor in any given locality should also be able to give this information. His interests, however, are sometimes limited to his local work, and it is safer to apply to the higher authorities for the more general information needed.

Of the various forms of affliction the visitor will encounter, feeble-mindedness and tuberculosis are the most general and the most disastrous socially. Statistics are not available to show for how much of our poverty they are responsible, but every charity worker feels that if they could be checked we should have taken a long step toward drying up the sources of want. Feeble-minded men and women marry and burden the community with children apt to be degenerate mentally or physically, or both; or they remain unmarried and add to the population a similar number of descendants handicapped by the added disadvantage of illegitimacy.

Tuberculosis is snatching away men and women in the prime of life, capable of supporting themselves and their dependents in comfort—fathers and mothers whose death leaves their families to sink into poverty, and whose illness too often involves the transmission of the disease to others. And in both cases the evil might be reduced to an as yet uncalculated minimum by the application to the problem of common sense and ordinary business sagacity on the part of the community.

Feeble-mindedness presents a troublesome problem to the visitor, both on account of the generally insufficient provision made for its care, and of the difficulty of persuading the ordinary family to allow the sufferer to receive this care, even when it can be had. It exists in widely differing degrees, ranging from a slight dullness to absolute idiocy. Those who are only a little below the normal standard may go through life in much the same fashion as their fellows, always lagging a little behind, always at the foot of their classes in school, always getting the poorly paid positions in the outside world, the first to be laid off and the last to be taken on at their respective places of employment, usually having a harder time than the average man or woman, frequently needing a helping hand, but still, on the whole, capable of making their own way under ordinary conditions. On the other hand, the low grade imbeciles and the absolutely idiotic generally find their way, sooner or later, into institutions where, even if these are only the county poor farms, they are cared for more or less wisely and tenderly, and where they are, at least, out of the way of receiving or inflicting serious harm. But the intermediate classes present a problem full of difficulty

and bristling with dangers both for the sufferer and for society.

The consensus of opinion at present is that feeble-minded children are best provided for by placing them in institutions where work and educational facilities adapted to their varying degrees of intelligence may be furnished them, where they may be more carefully classified than is possible in ordinary schools for the backward and deficient, and where suitable care may be exercised over them unceasingly. Under this treatment the brightest may become able to go back to a normal life and play their parts in the world, while those who cannot do that may become partially self-supporting, and—which is of more importance—lead safe and fairly happy lives. Some oppose this method of treatment, claiming that the abnormal child stands peculiarly in need of the stimulus received from contact with normal companions, and that segregation results in increasing his defects. The facts, so far as they have yet been gathered, do not seem to sustain this view, and the most enlightened states are providing such schools for the children and colonies for similar care of the adult feeble-minded.

Frequently, even when admission to such an institution can be secured for a feeble-minded child, it will be found that the parents object to parting with it. This is especially apt to be the case if the institution is at any distance. There is much that is beautiful in the care and tenderness often manifested by a whole family toward a defective member, but there is danger that too great sacrifices may be made through the affection its helplessness evokes. The degree of urgency which should be exercised to secure the child's removal should depend

not only on its own chances of improvement, but on the effect on the other children of its retention in the home.

There is no question that in many instances normal children suffer from the presence in the family of a feeble-minded child. Sometimes this injury is definite and concrete, as when some child must be kept from school to look after the afflicted member. Often it is less immediately obvious, as when the other children are subjected to a severe nervous strain through the peculiarities of the sufferer, or as when younger children are in danger of contamination through the moral irresponsibility of an older member of the family. Sometimes a child too defective to be held accountable manifests a curious tendency to pick up profanity and vulgarity, and to bring into the home the coarsest talk of the street corner, or other loafing place.

Generally speaking, in any state which provides well for its feeble-minded children, the visitor should use every means to persuade the parents to consent to place a defective child under proper care. When, however, the almshouse or poor farm is the only asylum for such unfortunates, nothing but the certainty of direct and serious harm to the other children through the presence in the home of the defective child should lead the visitor to urge sending it away. If this step becomes necessary, the visitor should make a point of seeing the child frequently after its commitment, and keeping well informed as to the conditions of its life.

Whatever may be thought of the policy of segregating feeble-minded children, charitable experts are agreed that it is the only wise course to take with feeble-minded adults. The man or woman of this class allowed to go at large is almost sure to become a parent, and there is

a close connection between feeble-minded parentage and degenerate offspring. The records of almost any almshouse will show instances of feeble-minded women who have been sent there again and again for their confinement. No such direct evidence of the social effect of allowing feeble-minded men their liberty is attainable, but a little thought will show that they are likely to constitute an even more serious menace to society than defective women. Some medical experts feel that this ground alone justifies the custodial care of defective men, and that its seriousness is not at all recognized as yet. "The records of crime," says one authority on the subject, "show that a material percentage of the assaults committed upon women are done by imbeciles." Yet in most cases, unless the sufferer is so defective as to be absolutely incapable of self-support, the authorities have no power to keep him under restraint.

In the more advanced communities, colonies for the care of feeble-minded adults have been established, usually under state supervision, in which the mentally defective are maintained, given studies, amusements and other means of development adapted to their condition, employed at such work as they can do, and made as happy and useful as possible. They are kept here under permanent custodial care, so that there is no possibility of their transmitting their infirmity, of becoming a source of moral danger to others, or of burdening society with unfortunate children for whom they are incapable of caring. These refuges for the feeble-minded have never been made self-supporting, and probably never can be, but in their preventive work they pay for their maintenance ten times over.

In states in which no such institutions have been

established, there is no satisfactory method of treating adult feeble-mindedness. If a feeble-minded but partially self-supporting woman becomes the mother of an illegitimate child, she is very apt to be sent to the almshouse for her confinement, and by dint of urgent representations to the proper authorities it is sometimes possible to secure her retention there. Naturally, before attempting this course the visitor needs to make sure that the almshouse in question is so managed that the woman will be safer there than outside, which is not always a foregone conclusion.

Two objections are sometimes brought against this course: first, that it is a terrible thing to subject a young woman, capable of much useful service and of much enjoyment, to what is practically imprisonment for life; and secondly, that the community cannot afford to assume the burden of her lifelong support. In regard to the first objection, it must be admitted that it is terrible. The fate of the feeble-minded for whom their community makes no proper provision is distressing to contemplate under any circumstances. But it is as expedient now as it was nineteen centuries ago that one man should die for the people, and it is better that one woman should be imprisoned for life, if no better arrangement can be made for her safeguarding, than that she should bring into the world unhappy children to whom she can give no adequate care, whose lives may easily be a burden to the community and a weariness to themselves.

The second objection is usually the weightier one with the local authorities with whom rests the decision in any particular case. The life of Rosie Dexter furnishes a good instance of the comparative expense to

the community of institutional care versus self-support in the case of the weak-minded. Rosie was a good-natured, healthy colored woman, unmistakably defective mentally, but making up for it by great physical strength, a cheerful disposition, and untiring willingness to work. Apparently she was a sister to Topsy, since no amount of search ever revealed her parentage. At the time she came under the notice of a visitor for a certain charitable society she was twenty-five, already the mother of three illegitimate children, and had gone to the county poorhouse for her fourth confinement.

A little investigation showed that while capable of self-support under guidance, she was being deliberately exploited by one set after another of unscrupulous acquaintances. When she emerged from the almshouse with a child she would be given shelter by some alleged friend, who in return would expect her to take in all the washings which could be procured, Rosie doing the work and the friend handling the returns. Rosie had no objection to work, and as long as she had enough to eat, an occasional supply of tobacco, and her evenings to herself, which meant spending them in very dubious company, it was impossible to persuade her to adopt any other kind of life. If illness came, if it was temporary, the friend would shelter her; if it was more lasting, as she had no legal claim on anyone, no home and no relatives, she went to the poorhouse until recovery, when this same friend or another would be entirely willing to renew the arrangement.

After repeated attempts to improve this state of affairs, the visitor interested at last suggested to the county authorities that it might be advisable to send Rosie to the almshouse and keep her there permanently.

Great was the astonishment created by this idea. "Do you realize," they asked, "that that woman isn't thirty years old, and that she may live to be eighty? She's perfectly well able to support herself. We have enough to do taking care of those who can't help themselves. We can't afford to take care of able-bodied men and women. She'll have to look out for herself."

That was fifteen years ago. Recently the visitor returned to the neighborhood after a long absence and looked about to see how Rosie had fared taking care of herself. She had been, in all, the mother of twelve children. Four had died at a very early age, and the public authorities had had to bury them. Four, all under ten years old, showed no signs of abnormality. Two, one a low grade imbecile, and the other epileptic and feeble-minded, were "on the town," with no prospect of ever becoming even partially self-supporting. One, a boy of fourteen, had shown marked criminal tendencies, and was in a reform school, committed for minority on a charge of incendiarism. One, a girl of eighteen, was the mother of an illegitimate child, born in the almshouse. Rosie was still looking out for herself. The visitor is now engaged in trying to figure out with the public authorities just how the profit and loss account stands, and what the community saved by its refusal to support an able-bodied woman, "perfectly well able to take care of herself."

Epilepsy and insanity are sometimes classed with feeble-mindedness, although there is no necessary connection between them, beyond the fact that all three show defects or aberrations of mentality. Epilepsy is not infrequently an accompaniment of feeble-mindedness. It is a disease which can rarely be treated success-

fully in the home of the patient, unless among the wealthier classes. Like feeble-mindedness, it has been found that it can be advantageously treated in colonies, in which appropriate work and recreation can be furnished, in which the diet can be closely regulated, in which the patient can be kept continuously under medical supervision, and in which, if incurable, he can at least be kept in safety and reasonable happiness. In some cases the patient is apparently cured, and goes out to lead a normal life. In others, while the disease is not entirely vanquished, it is so reduced that the patient can safely return to his family. A residuum remains of cases in which permanent custodial care is as important as it is for the feeble-minded.

In states which maintain such institutions the visitor should lose no time in inducing parents to send children there. Where no such care is provided, and the almshouse or poor farm is the only refuge, the situation is far more difficult. It is impossible in the ordinary institution of this kind to provide suitable care for epileptics, and they are apt to degenerate mentally and morally within its walls.

Sometimes it will be found possible to raise the money to send an epileptic child to an institution or colony in another state, where it may have proper care, but inasmuch as this means a continuous charge for years, perhaps for the whole life of the unfortunate, it is a difficult task to carry through. When there is a chance that a child may be completely restored, or even very materially helped, by some years of such treatment, it is more than worth while to make the effort. In cases where there is no possibility of cure or marked improvement, it is a question whether the time and strength necessary

to raise the money for sending the child away would not be better employed in helping some curable case.

Ordinarily the visitor will not have as much to do with insanity as with other forms of mental disease, because among the poor this trouble is not usually diagnosed as insanity until the patient becomes dangerous to the community. When he reaches this point the public authorities usually step in and remove him to an asylum, whether or not the family wish it. An observant visitor may sometimes avert a tragedy by insisting upon a medical examination when a man is seen to be "queer," before the trouble reaches an acute stage. In some instances a mental breakdown may be prevented by provision for a rest under proper conditions, with abundant nourishment and freedom from care. This usually means sending the sufferer to some sanitarium, and in most communities this in turn means raising the necessary money by a personal appeal. Money used for such purposes may emphatically be called preventive aid, and generally its expenditure is an unmixed economy, even from the most material point of view. What it saves in the way of human suffering, dependency and degradation cannot be estimated.

To summarize: In each of the trinity of afflictions, feeble-mindedness, epilepsy, and insanity, there will be found cases which respond to treatment and cases which are hopeless. It is doubtful whether feeble-mindedness can properly be termed curable. In some very rare cases it is due to some physical cause or defect which may be removed or remedied, after which the patient becomes normal, but ordinarily it is a permanent affliction. All but the absolutely imbecile, however, may be much benefited by proper training. Epilepsy is sometimes and

insanity often curable, and both are susceptible of improvement even when they cannot be completely cured. Every consideration of humanity and economy urges that no pains should be spared to place the curable cases under conditions which may effect the cure. The same considerations urge no less strongly that the incurable cases should be segregated, that they should be placed under proper care and given every alleviation of which their lot allows, but never permitted to mingle freely in the life for which their infirmity unfits them, and in which they are in danger themselves and a possible source of danger to others. Above all, the incurable cases should not be allowed to reproduce themselves. They are the visibly unfit, and the welfare of the race demands that they lead celibate lives.

CHAPTER XIX

SPECIAL CASES: CONSUMPTIVES

IN REGARD to tuberculosis the attitude of charitable workers has undergone in recent years an even more radical change than in regard to wife desertion. Fifteen years ago, although the experiments which have led to our present knowledge of the subject were under way, people in general knew nothing of them. Consumption was accepted, just as yellow fever had been by earlier generations—a scourge, to be sure, responsible for much individual suffering and much social loss, but as inevitable as an earthquake or a tornado. How much it cost the community in both respects was not even faintly realized, and the only responsibility felt in connection with it was that of providing for the last days of those who could not take care of themselves, and of aiding the dependents left by the death of a tuberculous patient.

When, however, a few years ago the medical profession announced authoritatively that tuberculosis is a communicable disease, that its ravages might be greatly checked, and that, in its earlier stages, it might be cured, charitable workers all over the country woke up to the fact that one of the greatest causes of death, disease and poverty in the whole dismal category might be, if not eradicated, at least shorn of much of its power. Associations for the battle against tuberculosis were formed in city after city, sanitaria were opened, the comparative effectiveness of different climates and different methods was studied, and the widespread interest was promptly

organized into the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, which, holding its first meeting in 1905, has set before itself as an ideal the inauguration of a systematic campaign against tuberculosis throughout the Union.

Even yet the social cost of the disease is not generally realized. The number of victims is appalling. It is estimated that one in every ten of the total population dies of tuberculosis.

"Each year it kills over a hundred thousand of our men and women, and most of these are cut off in the very prime of life. To women between twenty and forty-five it brings one-third of all deaths; to men between thirty and forty-five it brings thirty-two per cent. Most startling of all—to young men between twenty and twenty-nine it brings no less than thirty-six per cent. of deaths from all causes."

What it means to the community to lose such numbers of producers or possible producers at the very time of their greatest activity can hardly be estimated. What it means to the individual family is forced upon the charity worker by case after case of suffering and dependence, perhaps of pauperism and degeneracy, due to this cause. The long illness which precedes the end, diminishing the income at the same time that it increases expenses, leaves the family ill prepared to face the crisis which may follow the sufferer's death. When he has been the principal wage-earner, his death too often means that for years the family will be partially dependent, will be under-nourished and over-worked, and subjected to the disheartening strain of an unequal struggle with adverse conditions. Because of its lingering and expensive illness, and because the disease so often attacks the head

of a family, consumption is now generally recognized by social workers as "a cause of poverty out of all proportion to its importance as a cause of death." Some even look upon it as the leading cause of want. Dr. Knopf, a well known authority on tuberculosis, says:

"To my mind the solution of the tuberculosis problem means the solution of the social problem. Whatever prevents the development of tuberculosis will prevent social misery. Whatever cures it will help to cure the social ills. Insomuch as we diminish tuberculosis among the masses we shall diminish suffering, misery and social discontent, and when the problem of tuberculosis shall have been solved we shall be nearer the millennium than we have ever been before."

Any effective attack upon the disease as a whole must come through organized effort, but so much may be done for the individual case by private interest and assistance that the visitor should take pains to become familiar with the latest discussions of the subject. The three points of greatest interest to the worker are its preventability, its curability and its communicability. In connection with each of these there is work to be done.

In regard to prevention, measures of any far reaching consequence are beyond the power of the individual visitor, yet something may be done by preaching the commonplaces of ventilation, of the need of sunlight and of outdoor exercise or recreation. Instruction in these matters, as well as in certain forms of cleanliness especially important in preventing the transmission of the disease, is now given in many public schools, but even when this is the case, the visitor will find abundant need of reënforcing these teachings.

The home conditions often make such teachings seem

rather a mockery. When a family must live in an old house with a record of from two to twelve deaths from tuberculosis which have occurred within it; when from two to six persons must sleep in a small and sunless room; when the only way of obtaining fresh air is by creating a draft, and when the family supply of coal is so scanty that any diminution of the heat of the house is a serious matter; when the air which can be admitted by such means is of very dubious quality; and in a dozen other easily imaginable circumstances, the visitor's exhortations to maintain an abundant supply of good air, to sleep in well ventilated rooms and to live out of doors as much as possible, are apt to be accepted as interesting but of little practical importance.

Still, the worse the condition, from a sanitary standpoint, of the home the more cause for preaching in season and out the need of hygienic precautions, and the more earnestly the visitor should strive to show how to make the most of any existing possibilities. Sometimes the only thing to be done is to urge and, if necessary, to aid the family to seek better quarters. The necessity for securing accommodations at a low rent may be one of the most fatal ways in which the curse of the poor is their poverty, and it not infrequently happens that help given for the purpose of installing a family in more healthful quarters is preventive work of the most effective character.

The curability of consumption in its earlier stages is a point in connection with which the visitor is apt to find far more direct and concrete work to do. Since it is impossible for an untrained observer to recognize the disease with certainty, even when it has reached an advanced stage, the visitor should insist upon anyone

who shows any of the commoner symptoms submitting to a medical examination. Usually this can be secured without charge, either through the out-patient department of some hospital, through the health department, or through public dispensaries, according to the custom of each place. Where no provision for it exists, a doctor can usually be found who will make the examination, either as a matter of kindness or from interest in the disease. From this examination it can be learned not only whether the disease exists, but what progress it has made, what are the chances of curing it and what treatment is demanded.

There was formerly an idea that climate is the most important matter in the treatment of consumption, and Colorado and one or two other western states were looked upon as peculiarly desirable localities for sufferers from the disease. In their anxiety to secure the benefit of these climates for their patients, charitable workers sometimes forgot that a consumptive cannot live on air, no matter how exhilarating that air may be, and innumerable invalids were dispatched to the West without provision of any kind having been made for their maintenance there. The result was that the charities of these localities were wholly inadequate to the burden thrown upon them, and that the patients often suffered severely, losing through the hardships and anxieties of their existence the benefit which the climate might have given them. In many cases their transfer resulted only in their dying, lonely and uncared for, among strangers.

It seems almost superfluous to say that no invalid should be sent away from home until it has been made certain that he will receive proper care and maintenance at the place to which he is sent. The New York Com-

mittee on the Prevention of Tuberculosis strongly advises that no patients be sent away unless:

"(a) They are physically able to work and have secured in advance a definite assurance of the opportunity to perform work of a proper character at wages sufficient for their suitable support; or,

"(b) Unless they have at their disposal at least $250 in addition to railroad fare."

If a patient can be sent away under either of these conditions, the change may be an excellent thing, but if such conditions cannot be secured, it is fairer for all concerned that he should stay at home, no matter what the consequences.

Of late years, however, experts do not lay so much stress on climate, placing the emphasis rather on certain conditions of living and nourishment, which may be secured in almost any locality. These can be most easily provided in an institution. Some states have public sanitariums, to which consumptives may be admitted free of charge, or at a very small charge, according to their circumstances. Where there are no such public institutions it will usually be found difficult to secure proper treatment. In most cases sanitariums maintained by private effort are not free; the amount charged may be less than the full sum needed for each patient's treatment, the difference being made up by private contributions, but even this reduced rate is often far beyond the consumptive's own means. Often, too, there will be no place for the treatment of tuberculosis, free or otherwise, near the sufferer's home, and if he is to be given suitable care it will be necessary to send him some distance away, thereby increasing both the expense and his own unwillingness to enter the institution.

Naturally, any such course involves raising a considerable sum of money, since the patient's board must be paid for an indefinite time, and probably help must be given to the family during his absence. Nevertheless, it is a matter of economy, as well as of humanity, to incur the expense. If the patient is the head of a family his illness means not only his own suffering and elimination from the industrial world, but the possible dependency of his family, the overtaxing of his wife, the putting his children to work at the earliest possible moment, very likely the under-nourishment of the whole family for a long period, and their consequent enfeeblement physically and sometimes morally. In view of the long train of evils attendant on the premature death of the wage-earner of a family the community cannot afford to let him die, if treatment will save his life.

When the disease is recognized and attacked in time a patient may sometimes be cured without entering an institution or ceasing to work. The difficulty and expense of securing proper treatment for a sufferer after the disease has reached an advanced stage make it highly desirable to take active measures earlier in the day, and the visitor should be on the alert to discover any possible case of incipient tuberculosis. If the patient's occupation is of an unhealthy or confining nature it may be necessary for him to give it up and seek something else. Outdoor employment is highly desirable. In the large cities the transportation systems offer a number of positions for ticket choppers, flagmen, platform attendants and the like, in which the work is at once light and carried on in the open air. In smaller cities these openings do not exist, and it is far more difficult to find anything suitable. Sometimes odd jobbing can be secured, or

there may be local industries which offer suitable conditions. When the patient is willing to take work in the country desirable openings may sometimes be found. Of course, ordinary farm work is out of the question, but light work about a gentleman's place, or a position as caretaker during the months when a country place is unoccupied may occasionally be secured.

In these cases it is not always easy to make sure that the patient shall secure the other desirable conditions of nourishment and regularity of life, but the constant dwelling in the open air does wonders by itself. In one community known to the writer, long before the medical profession announced the success of the fresh air treatment, a firm conviction had grown up that the peculiar odor given off by wood in the process of being converted into charcoal was a sure cure for consumption or any lung trouble. The charcoal burners find it necessary to live out of doors day and night while the burning is going on. Usually they erect a slight shelter near the burning piles, under which they sleep, but this is so slight that it amounts to open air sleeping. In that locality it was not an uncommon thing for a man who had developed tuberculosis to give up his work and go into the country "to burn charcoal," and while no records were ever kept, the natives declare that the plan rarely failed. Unwittingly they had hit upon the most important factor in the right treatment of tuberculosis; it was only their explanation of the cures which was at fault.

If it seems necessary for a patient to remain in his own home, his diet should be carefully supervised, and if the family income does not permit him to have an abundance of eggs, milk and similar nourishing and

easily digestible articles, help sufficient to supply these in liberal quantities for as long as they are needed should be provided. The patient should also be encouraged to seek the fresh air in every possible manner. If he only sits on his doorstep, it is better than sitting in the house, but he should be urged to go farther afield. Where there is not much in his immediate neighborhood to lure him out it may be well to provide tickets for all day excursions into the country, for street car and boat rides, and the like. The ordinary objection to giving help in a family with an able-bodied wage-earner does not apply here, as the very crux of the situation is that the wage-earner is not able-bodied, and the help is given expressly for the purpose of bringing him to that state.

The most serious objection to retaining in his own home a patient in an advanced stage of consumption lies in the danger of his communicating the disease. "It is entirely possible," says one authority, "for a patient to remain in his home during the whole course of the disease and to die there without communicating it to anyone else, but under the ordinary conditions of life among the poor it is highly improbable that he will do so." For this reason, even though a patient be incurable, a visitor should, if possible, secure his removal to an institution. Often this will be found impracticable. The public accommodations for tuberculosis patients are woefully insufficient, and when money must be raised to place a consumptive in a sanitarium people are often unwilling to give unless there is a prospect of recovery. The ordinary hospital will not receive incurable cases of tuberculosis, and too frequently there is absolutely no place for them.

Under such circumstances great care should be taken

that their stay in their homes is rendered as little harmful as possible. From any of the numerous anti-tuberculosis societies the visitor can procure small pamphlets setting forth simple rules for the patient and his family to observe, in order to prevent the spread of the disease. Many of the societies have these printed in different languages, which increases their usefulness indefinitely. It is not sufficient to give these to the family; the visitor should see that they are read and understood, and then should reënforce their precepts by constant exhortation.

In many places it is necessary to undertake a double duty in regard to the communicability of tuberculosis; the visitor should at one and the same time urge the observance of all reasonable precautions, and attack the exaggerated ideas of danger from this source, which often lead to positive cruelty toward a consumptive. Among some there prevails an idea that consumption is contagious as smallpox is, and that the moment a man is known to have the disease he should be shunned like the lepers of old. Indirectly this idea is responsible for a good deal of the difficulty in securing full information about the prevalence of tuberculosis, and obtaining from physicians such prompt and accurate returns of all cases as would enable a municipality to take effective steps against the disease.

A family knows, for instance, that if one of its members is declared to have tuberculosis, friends will shun them, the patient may be driven from his employment by the refusal of his mates to work with him, he may be forced to leave his home through the fear of the other tenants, and whether he dies or recovers the fact that there is consumption in that family will be held up against it as a black record for years to come. Under

such circumstances it is small wonder that a sympathetic doctor hesitates to report a case, or that an unscrupulous one is swayed by the certainty that such a report will mean losing the practice not only of that particular family, but of any other in the neighborhood in which a suspected case of tuberculosis may exist. The communicability of the disease should certainly be guarded against, but this attitude toward it is as cruel as it is senseless, and it is an important part of the visitor's duties to inculcate a reasonable mean.

The task of properly caring for a family in which tuberculosis exists or develops is not, as has been seen, an easy one, but it has its compensations. If the case can be taken in time and cured, the visitor has a definite and concrete proof of good accomplished, no small satisfaction in a work in which the results are so frequently wholly intangible. If the patient cannot be saved, his death may be rendered easier, and the evil may be checked at that point, the other members of the family may be kept from developing the disease, and a long series of ills averted. Also, in passing with the family through the long and painful illness, relations are almost sure to be formed which put the visitor in the best possible position for helping and advising through the difficult times which may follow.

PART III.—Social and Preventive Work

CHAPTER XX

PENNY PROVIDENT WORK

UP TO this point we have dealt mainly with individual cases of poverty and have striven to show how non-professional workers among the poor may aid the varying forms of distress which they are likely to meet. Such work accepts the social system as it is, and devotes itself to helping the poor to make the best of their lives under prevailing conditions.

There are other branches of philanthropic work coming yearly into more prominence, which deal primarily not with the individual, but with the causes which have brought him to the condition of want in which he finds himself. These causes may exist within his own character, as when a man is brought to want by thriftlessness or intemperance, or they may be imposed on him by social or industrial conditions. Sometimes, although the causes of want are moral defects of his own, the defects themselves are rather directly due to social conditions. When, for instance, a child is put into the messenger service at the earliest age allowed, when he is kept at work all night, sent to houses of the worst character, given constant opportunity for dishonesty, kept from acquiring any regular trade, and injured physically and morally by the irregularities and bad associations and constantly recurring temptations of his life, he is not wholly responsible for the fact that when

he outgrows the messenger service, he is so frequently unfitted for anything else, and that he is not seldom well started in a career of intemperance and dishonesty.

In other cases the causes of want are wholly social, having no relation to the sufferer's moral character. When, for instance, a laborer finds that the only tenement within his means is in a dark and unhealthy house, a house in which perhaps deaths from tuberculosis have already occurred, and within which in the dark passages and unsunned recesses the virulent germs may retain their vitality for a year or more, it is no reflection upon his moral worth if he develops consumption, and his family sinks into want through his inability to care for them. Nor is he responsible if his premature death forces his children into early and unsuitable work, and the whole family gravitates to a lower level.

Improved housing legislation, regulation of the employment of children, the passage and enforcement of compulsory school attendance laws, provision for safe and healthful conditions of work, the safeguarding of the public health, the development of a public conscience which will make impossible the over work and under pay of some of the sweated trades and some of the industries carried on by the lower grades of labor—these and many other lines of effort furnish examples of the work which must be done in the community at large, the work which simply cannot be accomplished by relief, no matter how effective, given to the individual case of want.

Such work, dealing almost wholly with causes and seeking to remove them by improving social conditions, has made a marvelous growth within recent times. It has been a natural development from the principle of the new philanthropy that "Causes of want must be sought,

and when found, must be removed or modified." Since its purpose is, by altering social conditions, to prevent the poor in future from suffering from the causes which are now operating to make and keep them poor, it is emphatically both social and preventive work.

Speaking generally, it might be said that there are two distinct lines of such work—that which seeks to improve external conditions, such, for instance, as the effort to secure legislation providing for improved housing conditions, and that which strives to improve the character and intellect of the classes affected by such legislation, both that they may benefit by it when obtained, and that they may be able to secure it for themselves. In practice, the two are apt to be closely connected. Every settlement and other centre of social activity undertakes them both, often so uniting them that it is impossible to separate them.

In the following chapters little attention will be paid to the more impersonal efforts to obtain better conditions. Neither will any attempt be made to consider adequately the various social activities touched upon, either in themselves or in their bearing on society as a whole. It is only designed to give such information as will enable the philanthropically inclined individual, looking about for the most effective way of putting in a certain amount of time, to form some idea of the varying opportunities presented.

Most forms of preventive work require an amount of coöperative effort and of financial support which renders it impossible for them to be undertaken except through the medium of organized associations. Where such associations exist the individual may do much as a worker or visitor for them; where they do not, it is

occasionally possible to do good service by attempting their work on a very modest scale. Whether or not this is practicable depends upon the particular kind of work under consideration. The average person, for instance, would find it difficult to undertake, single-handed, anything in the way of providing improved housing conditions, but many of the most effective forms of club work have been inaugurated as private ventures.

Of all the different forms of useful activity the simplest and easiest is probably furnished by the different associations for encouraging thrift. These are variously known as Penny Provident Associations, Stamp Savings Societies, Provident Savings Societies, etc., but their purpose is the same and their methods similar. They are formed to overcome the difficulty the poor find in retaining their savings until they reach an amount which can be deposited in a bank. The ordinary institution for savings does not accept less than a dollar, and it is difficult for a woman or child to save a dollar in a household where the demand for pennies, nickels and dimes is great and constant. Even fairly well-to-do people find it hard to accumulate small savings unless they have some way of putting them out of their own reach, and the difficulty increases a hundred fold among the poor. Moreover, the whole tendency of their way of life is to discourage thrift. The amount which can be laid aside is so small as to seem hardly worth saving; chance may render them independent of the trivial sums which they can save; and in a life full of uncertainties, they are inclined to feel that there is a solid gain in having had whatever they have spent their money for. That, at least, is secure, whatever may happen to them tomorrow.

For all these reasons, there is often much extravagance among the poor, for which they are hardly blamable, but which is especially injurious in its effect on the children during their formative years. It is a commonplace that the children of the poor have much more spending money, in proportion to the family income, than the children of the middle class. It comes in the shape of a penny now and a penny then, a nickel from this visitor and two or three cents from that relative, and is spent without forethought or care. The sums are so small that the idea of saving them hardly enters the child's head, unless put there by some outside influence.

To meet this situation, the stamp savings associations provide gummed stamps, usually rather larger than postage stamps, of varying denominations, ranging in value from one cent up to a dollar. They also provide small blank books or folders, divided into a certain number of spaces, each large enough to receive one of the stamps, which is to be gummed in. These stamps are then offered for sale at regular times and places. The saver purchases a stamp of any denomination his means permit and fastens it to his card or folder. Here it is safe. No matter how tempting the display in the candy shops he passes on his way home, no matter what the exigency, he cannot trade his folder for the coveted article, and the savings remain saved. When the folder is full of stamps, or when its value has reached a certain sum, the holder can redeem it, receiving the amount represented by the different stamps it contains.

It is obvious that in all this the association does nothing even approaching relief work. It gives the cost of the stamps and the folders, and also of any necessary clerical work, but this is given indirectly, to the work

rather than to any individual. The saver receives no gift of which he is conscious. He gains only the opportunity to save in an easy and regular fashion the smallest sums he can put aside, but this is a larger gain than would be suspected by anyone not familiar with the work.

Very frequently these stamps are offered for sale in the public schools, and at various clubs and centres, and in addition to this the associations often try to carry on the work among families in their own home. It frequently happens that the house mother could and would save small sums, but if she has to go to some centre to exchange her nickel for a stamp, the transaction becomes, if not impossible, at least so beset with difficulties that it is not even attempted. If, however, a visitor will come regularly to her house, week in and week out, on a given day, ready to furnish the stamp if she has the nickel, she is likely to find before long not only that she can spare the nickel, but that she can put by a dime. Other members of the family are apt to become interested and to start books; the desire to save will increase as the family begins to realize the cumulative effect of small deposits; and visitors and savers alike are often surprised at the result of the experiment.

It is evident that this plan of carrying the stamps to the house provides a field of activity for the most inexperienced visitor. It is the easiest form of philanthropic work, as it requires absolutely nothing beyond faithfulness and the ability to keep straight very simple accounts. The stamps are furnished by the society and the visitor is given the address of the family. The relation with these savers is at its beginning a purely business one, so that there is no embarrassment on either side.

Usually the society hopes and plans that the relation between visitor and visited should become a friendly one, and if the worker has any aptitude for getting on with people, and any interest in developing friendly terms, a very pleasant acquaintance, sometimes a genuine friendship, will spring up. This, however, is not a necessary result, and the worker need not feel committed to anything more than a business-like discharge of a very definite and simple duty. It is an excellent field for beginners, who are apt to feel a natural dread of the responsibilities involved in what is known as friendly visiting, but who find in this regularly recurring business call a natural and simple method of becoming acquainted with certain poor families. If the visits are persevered in for any length of time, they afford an excellent opportunity for gaining a knowledge of the standards and ideas of life prevailing among different classes, which will be of much value if distinctly charitable work is attempted later on.

Visitors who undertake such work must bear in mind that from the standpoint of the saver it is purely a business arrangement, and that consequently he sees no more reason for gratitude or sense of appreciation than he does when paying his rent. Indeed, upon occasion the savers are rather apt to patronize the visitors, assuming that the latter receive some compensation based on their sale of stamps.

"The insurance man was after me to take more insurance on Willie," said one good woman to the patient visitor who had been coming through rain and shine for a year past, "but I told him no, I couldn't do that without stopping off your stamps, and I wouldn't take my

trade away from anybody who treated me like a lady, like you do."

Naturally, looking upon the affair in this light, the saver will resent any flavor of patronage or condescension on the part of the visitors, who must choose whether to meet him on a purely business footing, or on a basis of simple human fellowship. If they choose the latter, they may establish a friendship which will enable them to be of much indirect use. Their advice will be sought as to the purpose and investment of savings, and by degrees, as they prove themselves friendly and helpful in counsel, the family perplexities will be laid before them, and they may find many opportunities for giving advice and suggestions which, coming from strangers, would be resented, but which are accepted willingly from one the family have learned to trust.

If, moreover, a time of trouble comes to the family, in which their savings prove all insufficient for the need, and help must be sought outside, the visitor is in an ideal position for seeing that the crisis is passed without permanent injury. Long intercourse has given the knowledge of the family which the charitable agent seeks more or less successfully to acquire by investigation. Knowing the disposition and capacity of the members of the family the visitor is enabled to judge, as a stranger could not possibly, how much help is needed and in what form it can best be given, how long it should be continued, and how it can be rendered most effective. It is not well for the visitor to give aid personally, but his advice and coöperation can make the work of a relief agency doubly helpful. If no such crisis occurs, the visitor has still been of practical use to the family by enabling them to accumulate the savings which would otherwise have

been dissipated and in helping them to build up habits of thrift, while the relation formed through the visits may be a help and a pleasure to both sides.

In communities where none of these savings societies exist, it is still possible for the worker to collect savings without the medium of the stamps. Some family which is never quite able to get through the winter without help may be persuaded to lay by money in the summer for the needs certain to arise within a few months. Usually this persuasion must be exerted by some one whom they trust, Sunday or day school teacher, an employer, or an agent of the charitable society which has helped them in times past. When once the visitor has been introduced by means of one of these agencies, the work is exactly the same as when undertaken for a society, except that receipts instead of stamps must be given for the money received. If it is desired to increase the work, there is usually little difficulty in doing so, as one saver tells another, and neighbor after neighbor is anxious to join in.

Sometimes where no penny provident society exists to furnish stamps, this work is begun for the avowed purpose of saving for some particular purpose, as for coal or shoes; more often its object is simply to induce putting aside whatever small sums can be spared, which may then be used for any purpose the saver finds desirable. The latter course seems more likely to produce a real appreciation of the advantages of thrift and of the value of money. Sometimes, however, it is easier to start a given person to save by holding up some specific object to be secured, and after the habit is once established it is likely to be continued, even after the desired object has been obtained.

This penny provident work presents a promising field for clubs and social service leagues, since every place affords an opening for it, while volunteers are often better adapted to this than to more complex forms of work. If no society for savings exists, one may be started with less expense than many other kinds of associations, or it may be dispensed with altogether. If stamps are desired, they may often be procured from the established societies in the larger cities, which are willing to sell their stamps in quantities to smaller societies or to clubs and groups, whether or not these latter happen to be within their own city. If the workers prefer not to tie up money in this way, they can begin without stamps or material of any kind, simply collecting and receipting for the savings obtained.

There are two things the collector should bear in mind: that the work to be effective must be done regularly, and that the visited must never be allowed to use it as a pretext for beggary. Regularity is essential, for if the visit is made not at some stated time, but whenever it suits the collector's convenience, the savings will usually not be forthcoming. If the saver does not know when to look for the visitor the temptations to spend are pretty sure to be too strong for resistance. There will be time, he thinks, to lay by something more before the visitor comes, and meanwhile this particular sum may go for this time. Moreover, if the collector comes irregularly, visits are very likely to occur at times which are embarrassing for the saver, and between getting ready for calls which are not made, and receiving calls which are not expected, the whole matter is apt to become an annoyance and to be given up.

The second matter is even more important. For the

most part this work is carried on among the self-supporting poor, who do not ask aid, or ask it only under stress of unusual circumstances. But almost invariably when such a system of visiting is put into practice some families of a different class will ask for the collector to call on them, not with any real intention of saving, but for the sake of getting in touch with someone who may presumably have much influence in procuring relief. After the first few sums have been saved the visitor is met with a tale of want and of pressing need for a little help, and if the response is favorable the need recurs regularly.

It is advisable for visitors, when such a request is proffered, to decline absolutely to give help themselves, reporting the situation, if circumstances seem to justify doing so, to some relief-giving agency, and giving through that whatever they may wish to bestow. If they yield to the temptation to give aid themselves, they are apt to find that their visits are becoming confined to the class of chronic applicants, and that the self-respecting poor refuse to have anything to do with the system, not caring to class themselves in any way with those who are using it merely as an excuse for alms getting.

If these two precautions are observed, however, the savings work offers an unusually good field for the many who cannot spare much time for the study of conditions or assume much responsibility for the care of families, but who would fain do some actual work and see at first hand something of the lives of other classes.

CHAPTER XXI

FRESH AIR AND SUMMER WORK

PROBABLY there never was a time when some fresh air work was not done. The individual worker among the poor, finding some child in need of a change and of different treatment, or some tired woman requiring a rest and more abundant nourishment, would naturally think of securing a place in the country or at the seaside for a time. Abroad the work grew up along different lines, in the shape of a country week during which children were received as guests in the country, while at a different season their little hosts received their turn in the city week spent in town. In this exchange the idea seems to have been educational, rather than philanthropic.

In its present organized form the fresh air movement is decidedly new. It was in 1877 that Mr. Willard Parsons, a young clergyman in Sherman, Pa., urged upon his congregation their duty toward the children of the slums, with the result that a certain number of them decided to invite a child or children into their homes for a two weeks' stay during the heat of summer, and the minister set off for New York to find the children. "They were to be the guests of the people of Sherman for a fortnight," says Riis, "and a warm welcome awaited them there. A right royal one they received when, in a few days, the pastor returned, bringing with him nine little waifs, the poorest and the neediest he had found in the tenements to which he went with his offer.

They were not such children as the farmfolk thereabouts saw every day, but they took them into their homes, and their hearts warmed to them day by day as they saw how much they needed their kindness; how under its influence they grew into bright and happy children like their own; and when, at the end of the two weeks, nine brown-faced, laughing boys and girls went back to tell of the wondrous things they had heard and seen, it was only to make room for another little band. Nor has ever a summer passed since that first, which witnessed sixty city urchins made happy at Sherman, that has not seen the hospitable houses of the Pennsylvania village opened to receive holiday parties like those from the slums of the far city."[1]

The idea took so rapidly that it quite outgrew the management of a single man. From place after place came in offers to receive the children, until New York was sending out parties far beyond her own borders. Securing the money for transportation and for the necessary additions to the children's wardrobes became a large—never a troublesome—question. For a few years the *Evening Post* undertook this duty, but before long passed it over to the *Tribune,* which has collected it, under the name of the *Tribune* Fresh Air Fund, ever since. Other funds were started in New York for the same purpose, and other cities took up the idea and enlarged and varied it.

Today there are few large cities through the North which do not carry on more or less—generally more—fresh air work. The original plan has been supplemented in various ways. One difficulty appeared soon after the beginning of the movement. It was possible to secure

[1] Riis, Children of the Poor, p. 154.

hosts for hundreds of children, but the number who needed the holiday ran up into the thousands. It was not desirable to send large numbers of the children very far from the city; the expense of transportation alone, in spite of the liberal reductions the railroad companies made, rendered this objectionable, and the dislike of the parents to send their children so far away and the added possibility of some disaster during the long trips lurked in the minds of the managers. Moreover, occasionally children would be frightened by the loneliness and stillness of an isolated country house; they missed their companions, and the benefits they should have received from their holiday were negatived by their homesickness. Also, it was evident that there would be an economy of effort in sending large groups of children together, and keeping them under one management. So fresh air homes were opened in which from twenty to a hundred or more children could be received at one time, kept a week or a fortnight, and then sent back, making room for another company.

But this did not meet the whole need. Some children could not leave their homes for two weeks, or even for one, so excursions were organized, in which children were taken out for a sail or into the country, and given all the fresh air and all the good times which could be crowded into one day. Variations of the original plan sprang into being. Boys' and girls' camps were organized under the supervision of churches, or Christian Associations, or clubs or settlements. Hospital Guilds opened floating hospitals in which sick babies with their mothers could be taken out into the fresh air of the ocean for a day, or, if the child's condition demanded it, for successive days. For the babies who needed con-

tinuous treatment were added hospitals by the water's edge, where good air and proper feeding and constant attendance could give them whatever chance might be attainable for a healthful beginning of life.

The benefits of this work were so marked among the children that it was inevitable it should be extended to adults. Vacation homes were opened for working girls, or for mothers with babies, or for invalids who had small chance of recovery under city conditions. Promptly a difficulty arose. Often a mother with a baby needed rest and change urgently, but as there were other children besides the baby, she could not be received. So in some places family camps or homes were opened, to which such a mother might go with her flock about her. There are obvious difficulties about the management of such a camp, so its use has never been very widespread, but where established it has been found satisfactory and very helpful.

In cities in which fresh air work has been organized, the volunteer worker can find abundant chances for usefulness. Ordinarily a certain number of paid agents are employed, but the work is large, and the summer is short and help is welcome. Whether the children are to be sent as guests to private homes, or received in some home or camp maintained by an association, it is essential that they should be sent out clean and free from all possibility of conveying any infectious or contagious disease. To secure this result needs repeated instructions, and much visiting to make sure that the instructions have been carried out. Getting the children to and from the station when going and returning, warning the parents of the time when they must be prepared to start, notifying them of the hour of the children's return, and

making sure that the small people reach their homes in safety in case the parents fail to meet them at the train—all these details take time and effort, and can be performed admirably by volunteers.

In places where there is no organized fresh air work it is always possible for an individual worker or for a small group to carry on as much as their means and time will permit. Ordinarily it is not difficult to find a limited number of country families who will receive one or two children for a couple of weeks during the summer, and sometimes they will be willing to keep the same children for a longer time or to welcome several relays. The best way of finding such places is to write early in the spring or before the spring, to clergymen throughout the neighboring villages and small towns, asking them to present the matter to their parishioners and to see if some one will not be willing to take a child or children. Sometimes it is well to describe the situation of a given child, asking whether it cannot be received for a given time. This, of course, involves making up one's mind at an early date what children one will try to get into the country, but when the work is to be conducted on a small scale this is desirable for several reasons.

If favorable responses are received to such requests, considerable pains should be taken to find out whether any of those who have given a general invitation to the children have any preferences as to what children they shall receive. Even for a visit of one or two weeks it makes a great deal of difference whether or not a child is suited to its environment. The future of the work, as well as the immediate benefit of the child, demands that care should be taken to send the right ones to given families.

A second point of much importance is that the child should be sent out in a satisfactory condition. If children are sent unclean and ragged, the work in the locality to which they go is likely to receive a sharp check. By writing to the organized charities or to any fresh air association of the larger cities, one can learn what is considered necessary in preparing children for the country. Naturally greater care is needed when they go as guests in private families than when they are sent to some fresh air home, where the managers are accustomed to receiving children from the poorest quarters, and are equipped with proper facilities for repairing any deficiencies in their preparation. Even in the latter case, however, it will probably be found that the managers have a well defined standard to which the children must conform before their admission.

Money will be needed for transportation both for the children and for whoever conducts them, as they cannot safely be sent without a guardian. Probably it will be found necessary, also, to provide shoes or to add in some way to their wardrobe. The childish idea of what is needed for a two weeks' visit is limited, and frequently is unenlightened by any wider view on the parents' parts. "I guess they'll take care of you where you're going," says the mother, and Johnnie and Jennie are ready to start off tranquilly in the clothes they wear and nothing else. Here, again, this does not matter so much when they are sent to some fresh air home, but for private families the arrival of guests thus unprovided is sometimes embarrassing.

The individual worker or the small group attempting this work in a locality where it has not yet been tried will certainly meet some difficulties and discouragements

before they can get it well under way. Some parents will be found who are suspicious of their motives, and some children who know nothing about the country and are a trifle afraid to venture into unfamiliar regions. A few years ago Miss Daskam published a clever story, "Ardelia in Arcady," setting forth the disappointment of a young woman who, finding a neglected little girl on the streets, straightway carries her off for a country vacation. With a sublime disregard for the ordinary methods of fresh air workers, the young woman makes no preparations of any kind, no enquiry into the child's tastes and habits, no effort to provide companionship or to put her into the right environment. She simply takes her from the streets and places her in an isolated country family, where there are no children and where she is as absolutely a foreigner in a strange land as her parents would have been if dropped into a Thibetan lamasery. Naturally, the child doesn't like it, makes her escape, returns to the city, and the story closes with her exultant reflection in the midst of the familiar noise and dirt and companionship: "Gee! Noo Yawk's de place."

A few children of Ardelia's kind certainly exist, who, even when placed with all possible care, will be so homesick that they must be returned without waiting for the close of their holiday, but they are unusual. Among children the worker is far more likely to encounter the attitude of Miss Kelley's delightful Little Citizens, with their longing envy of the "unhealthy" children who have been sent out by "de fresh air." But among adults, persons will more frequently be found who have become so accustomed to the slums that they are ill at ease elsewhere.

"I shall never forget my disappointment the first time

I tried to do any fresh air work," said one non-professional worker. "Mrs. Quinn was a woman I had been interested in for years. She lived in one of the dirtiest and noisiest parts of the city, where the trains just outside the window made it necessary to speak at the top of one's voice for the greater part of the time, where the air was so black with their smoke that she couldn't dry her clothes out of doors, and where the streets were so crowded and unsafe that her constant effort was to persuade her six children to stay in the house. She was absolutely worn out with years of hard work and undernourishment, and the doctors said she must have rest and change. So we planned for her to go to the country.

"It was hard work to persuade her, for she was certain some of the children would be run over if she didn't keep them in sight all the time. We engaged a woman, a trusted friend and neighbor of hers, to take care of the house and children. We planned for her to take the baby with her, and we arranged that her sister should go, too, to keep her from being lonesome. We promised to call at the house every day and to send her instant word if anything went wrong. And finally, with the aid of every one of her friends and relatives, we got her to go. I went over to the station to see her off, rather doubtful whether she wouldn't refuse to leave at the last moment, but she lived up to her agreement. There she was, with her baby and her bags and her sister, and a most dolorous countenance. But she did not want to seem ungrateful.

"'I guess I'll like it after I get down there, Miss Winslow,' she said, essaying to smile while tears forced their way; 'I guess it's just like when my other sister died. I thought I couldn't ever stand it, but I got used

to that, and I suppose I'll get used to this, too.' And in this spirit of heroic resignation she went off to recuperate, while I was left to wonder whether the doctor's orders were the best ones to follow, after all, in that case. I concluded they weren't when she came back in five days, absolutely unable to stand her homesickness."

Cases like this are very unusual, but when they are met the benefits of an outing, without its disadvantages, can sometimes be secured by a series of day excursions scattered through the summer. In Boston of late a day camp for consumptives has met with considerable success. It is designed to meet the situation of those who need fresh air and sanitarium treatment, but who cannot leave their homes altogether. In the morning they come or are brought to the camp, where they spend the day absolutely in the open air, going back at night, to return the next morning. They secure the rest, the fresh air, the instruction in the proper methods of caring for themselves, and all without leaving their homes. An extension of this principle might profitably be worked out for the benefit of some of the worn-out wives and mothers who cannot leave their homes for more than a day at a time, yet who are in urgent need of a rest and change.

Sending out children for country vacations when it cannot be done through the medium of some organization involves so much responsibility and so much attention to details, that an individual working alone will probably find it better to undertake only day excursions. These may be made as large or as small, as simple or as elaborate, as one chooses. The visitors who have been collecting stamp savings or taking charge of a home library can connect this work effectively with the winter's program by taking the groups of children with

whom they have already established relations. The day will be the more successful for the friendship already begun, and the future work will be the pleasanter for the memory of a happy time together. If the visitor is inexperienced it is well to begin with a small group, or else to take only children who are strictly well behaved. The exhilaration of a holiday is sometimes too much for childish self-restraint, and if the group is large a few unmanageable members may make serious trouble. Ordinarily, though, there is little danger of this. The novelty of the occasion, the enjoyment of the games, and the new sights of the country, the rapture of the out of door meal—the luncheon is a most important feature of the day—the desire to do everything and see everything which anybody else has or can—all this will occupy the children pretty fully, and make their management very little trouble.

Undoubtedly more of this informal fresh air work would be done if the need for it were recognized. In the large cities fresh air work is tolerably comprehensive. In some places it really seems as though the supply had very nearly exceeded the demand, and children who haven't been to the country are at a premium. But in the smaller cities little is done, owing to an impression that the children don't need it. There aren't any well defined slums, anyhow, and there's a good deal of fresh air all around, and there are parks within easy reaching distance, and there isn't any need of copying what is doubtless very useful in a large city. So the average citizen thinks, and dismisses the matter, forgetting that a distance which he can easily traverse in car or carriage may be prohibitive for children who cannot pay car fares, and who do not know where the breathing spots

are to be found, and who may be as closely confined to their shabby streets as any denizen of the slums to his quarters.

"I was once taking a group of boys of from ten to thirteen years old to a fresh air cottage from one of our smaller cities," said a professional worker, "and to pass the time proposed that each should tell about the last time he was in the country. There was a dead silence.

" 'Why, boys,' I asked, 'haven't any of you ever been in the country?'

" 'He has,' cried several, pointing to one little urchin.

" 'Well, tell us about it, Harry,' I urged.

"Harry's air of importance vanished suddenly. 'Well, I don't remember much about it, Miss Green,' he answered slowly. 'I wasn't but six years old, and my father he took me to the park, but I don't recollect what it was like.'

"And that was the nearest approach to a knowledge of the country I could find among seven boys, all growing up in a small city, which thought itself well provided with parks and breathing places. On another occasion I was taking a family party out for a day in the country, and the youngest, a boy of nine, was so rapturously absorbed in looking from the window that he attracted my attention.

" 'He isn't used to the street cars, is he?' I asked his mother casually.

" 'No, ma'am,' she replied, judicially, 'I couldn't say he is just used to 'em. He was on 'em once before, but he was only two then, and I guess he don't remember it.' "

Besides fresh air work there are other seasonal activities which afford some opportunities for volunteer

workers. Vacation schools and play grounds present some openings, but in both there is an absolute necessity for regularity and considerable need for technical training of some kind. The importance of such work cannot be overestimated, but it cannot be taken up incidentally by inexperienced workers. Ordinarily such enterprises can only be attempted through an organization, and the major part of their work must be carried on by trained employees.

A much easier form of activity is offered in connection with the flower missions. This is a form of work which requires a minimum of machinery. It may be carried on by any one who is able to get into the country to gather flowers, or who has a garden to supply them. There is no difficulty about finding recipients. Simply go through the poorer quarters with a bouquet, and it will be a wonder if some child does not proffer a request for "Just one flower, please." As soon as one has made the venture and found it successful, a crowd will spring up, and the worker's hands will be emptied long before the demand is exhausted.

Where a formal organization has been adopted the Flower Mission usually receives not only flowers, but fruits and reading matter from the surrounding country, and undertakes to distribute these gifts among the poor, trying to make them go, as far as possible, to those who would not receive such remembrances from other sources. Generally such an organization receives its flowers twice or three times a week, and as these are sent in quantity, there is usually a constant demand for volunteers to make up the flowers into bunches and to carry them to the recipients. This is work involving no responsibility and requiring no training, so that it makes

an easy and pleasant way of beginning for anyone who wishes to take some part in philanthropic work, and to build up an acquaintance naturally among the poor.

CHAPTER XXII

HOME LIBRARY CLUBS

LIKE many other good things, the home library work comes to us from Massachusetts, where it was inaugurated in 1887 by Mr. Charles Birtwell, of the Boston Children's Aid Society. His account of its inception gives so good an idea of the spirit of the work that it may be quoted at length:

"I had been connected with the Children's Aid Society but a short time when many avenues of work opened up before me, and it was quite perplexing to see how to make my relations to the various children I became acquainted with real and vital. Among other things the children ought to have the benefit of good reading and to become lovers of good books. Indeed, a great many things needed to be done for and by the children. Out of this opportunity and need the Home Library was evolved.

"A little bookcase was designed. It was made of white wood, stained cherry, with a glass door and Yale lock. It contained a shelf for fifteen books, and above that another for juvenile periodicals. The whole thing, carefully designed and neatly made, was pleasing to the eye.

"I asked my little friend Rosa at the North End, Barbara over in South Boston, and Giovanni at the South End, if they would like little libraries in their homes of which they should be librarians, and from which their playmates or workmates might draw books,

the supply to be replenished from time to time. They welcomed the idea heartily, and with me set about choosing the boys and girls of their respective neighborhoods who were to form the library groups. Then a time was appointed for the first meeting of each library. The children who had been enrolled as members met with me in the little librarian's home, and while one child held the lamp, another the screwdriver, another the screws, and the rest looked on, we sought a secure spot on the wall of the living room of the librarian's family, and there fastened the library.

"I remember that to start the first library off with vigor, and secure the benefit of a little *esprit de corps* from the beginning, I went with the children the evening before the establishment of the library to see the cyclorama of the battle of Gettysburg. We rode in a driving snowstorm in the street cars from the North End, and had a gala evening. We got a bit acquainted, and on the next evening, the time appointed for the laying of the corner-stone of the whole Home Library structure, you may be sure the children without exception were on hand. I believe we had to wait a little while for Jennie, who lived across the hallway from Rosa, to 'finish her dishes;' then up went the library. Very quickly the second library was established in South Boston, the third at the South End, and before long some neighborhoods were dotted with libraries."

In the working out of the plan it was found necessary to have some regular meeting time for the library group, and to have some visitor who would meet with them at this time. Ordinarily, the group consists of from eight to twelve members. The visitor meets with them once a week, sees that the books taken out are returned, helps

the children to choose new ones, talks over what they are reading, and then devotes the rest of the meeting to any kind of a good time which appeals to that particular club.

Naturally the kind of good time demanded varies widely according to the taste of the children and the ability of the leader. Classes in cooking, sewing, carpentering, gymnastic work, basketry and modelling; games, especially the quieter kinds, which can be played indoors without drawing down the wrath of the housewife in whose domain the meeting is held; stories and songs and recitations and amateur—exceedingly amateur—dramatics; these singly or in any imaginable combination may be utilized as fancy suggests or the occasion demands.

It will be seen that there is here an almost unlimited field for the visitor's abilities. While the club may and frequently does serve to give the children some idea of the pleasure of reading and of the joy and strength to be found in literature, still the books are largely a pretext, an opportunity for the far more important matter of getting into real, personal touch with the children. To establish relations of trust and liking with the club members, to lead them to look upon the visitor as genuinely sympathetic and interested in them, one to whom they may turn quite naturally and simply, as of right, in any perplexity or difficulty—that is the ideal of home library work.

In the course of striving to realize this ideal many other good ends may and indeed must be incidentally achieved. One especially good feature of the work is that it is carried on in the home, and that its whole tendency is to strengthen the ties of home and family.

It not only teaches the child that it is possible to have a good time elsewhere than on the street,—any club or class work might do that,—but it shows him that it is entirely possible to enjoy himself in his own home, and it establishes a center of interest for the whole household. Naturally what goes on in the home itself possesses a peculiar interest for the parents and older children; moreover, these frequently become sharers in the fun.

"I don't think Mrs. Jones is ever absent from a meeting of the club," remarked one visitor, "and it is a constant surprise to me to hear her laugh. She looked such a miserable, dragged out thing when we began going there. I believe she was simply dying from monotony, and she enjoys the games and the singing as much as the smallest child there."

Another good feature of the work is the occasion it gives the visitor to open up to the children some of the avenues of enjoyment from which they are cut off by their ignorance of the opportunities provided for them. Most cities and towns offer certain advantages which are seldom utilized by those who most need them. The people are not indifferent to these; they are ignorant of them. Again and again the visitor will find children who have never been to the parks, who do not know that there is a public library or a picture gallery or an art museum; or if they have heard that such things exist, their existence remains to them a mere abstract fact with no relation whatever to their own lives. The routine of life is barren and ugly, and they do not know that beauty of art and beauty of nature are at hand, only waiting for them to come. To show them what their city offers, and to teach them to enjoy it, means happi-

ness now and resource against temptation later on.

Another advantage of the work is the opportunity it offers to detect among the children physical or mental trouble in the earlier stages, when remedial treatment may be effective. In cities in which medical inspection of the school children has been established, and is carried on adequately, this may not be important, but elsewhere it is no small part of the visitor's opportunity for usefulness.

The visitor should be on the alert, not only to find out if any trouble exists, but to make sure that it is remedied. It is not enough, for instance, to find out that a child is having trouble with his eyes and to tell the parents where to take it for treatment. The poor are often strangely unappreciative of the danger of neglect in such matters, and without the slightest intention of letting the child suffer, the visit to the hospital or dispensary will be delayed indefinitely, until the visitor decides that the only thing to be done is to take the child in person. Even then the matter is not ended, for endless effort may be required to ensure the observance of the directions given. The visitor should also be on the watch for any symptoms of dullness or stupidity in the children, and should any such appear, should take pains to find out what is the cause, and whether it can be removed. Often the whole affair will prove trivial; sometimes it will indicate the beginning of trouble which, if unchecked, may involve loss of sight or hearing or some equally serious result.

The visitor will certainly encounter many difficulties, some obvious, some unanticipated. Racial disagreements make trouble sometimes, though not as often as might be expected. When they exist, however, they are

apt to be rather insurmountable, as one visitor found who had a promising club in a neighborhood of Irish and Italians. For the first three meetings all went admirably, but in the fourth, apropos of some historical allusion, trouble suddenly loomed on the horizon in the shape of a discussion as to the real discoverer of America. The Italians as one boy upheld the claims of their countryman, while the Irish swore by Lief Erickson, on the general principle that "Columbus was only a dago, and didn't know nothing, nohow." In vain the visitor essayed to settle the difficulty. The session broke up in confusion, a free fight—which may have had nothing to do with the matter—occurred on the street within half an hour, and it was never possible to get that club together again.

The commonest difficulty lies in the numerous petty quarrels and jealousies within a neighborhood, and the visitor's tact and ingenuity will be strained to the utmost to keep these out of the clubs. "It seems to me," sighed one weary worker, "that there hasn't been a week this winter when half my children's parents have been on speaking terms with the other half. There are innumerable factions and they're changing from one to the other all the time, but the proportion remains about the same. The children take it up, and Mamie can't come because Jennie does, and Jimmie will have to go home unless Johnnie is turned out, and Lily and Lulu may take out books but mayn't speak to any of the others, until I feel as if the club is nothing but an embodied centrifugal force with me in the center vainly trying to act as a centripetal influence."

And pettiness is not the only bad feature of these neighborhood quarrels. We hear much of the kindness

of the poor to one another, but the visitor comes to realize that they may be cruel, too, with a cruelty which knows just how to strike most tellingly.

"Why weren't the girls at the club yesterday, Mrs. Blank?" asked the visitor.

Mrs. Blank hesitated, and then—she had come to know the visitor well—replied almost tearfully:

"It's just like this, Miss Brown. They can't wear their winter hats now; it's 'most July. But their pa's been loafing all of three months, since the works shut down, and I ain't got any money for hats. That Salvation Army store 'round the corner had some little straw hats for ten cents apiece—real pretty they were—and I got a couple of 'em, and I washed and ironed some old ribbons Mrs. Dexter, the lady I wash for, gave me, and I trimmed up them hats till they did look real elegant. But the Johnson children saw me buying them, and they told the rest, and now whenever my girls go out, they're all after them, and they shout 'Hallelujah! hallelujah!' at them, and call them 'Salvation Lassies,' and want to know where their drum is, and things like that till they just can't stand it, and I don't blame 'em. I guess I'll have to keep 'em indoors till my man gets work again."

The visitor who has gone into the work with high enthusiasm and lofty ideals is apt to feel discouraged when these quarrels over trifles appear on every hand, and time and strength must go in trying to reconcile the disputants, or at least so to conciliate them that their differences shall not keep the children from the library. Nevertheless, in this very work of conciliation may lie one of the most hopeful opportunities of the club. The little group may become a unifying influence for the

neighborhood, supplying a common topic, and helping to sink petty differences in a general interest in the children's enjoyment and progress. It may even, if the worker is so inclined, become a kind of nucleus for general neighborhood work, serving naturally as an introduction to clubs and classes for the elder members of the community.

If the worker does not wish to attempt anything so ambitious as this, it is still possible to bring in the parents occasionally, and to interest them as a group in some of the outings, the visits to the parks or museums or public buildings which the visitor will probably devise from time to time for the children. It will usually be the mothers who respond to an invitation to share in these, but this is as it should be, since their lives are monotonous in the extreme, and anything which varies their routine is worth while in itself, apart from its indirect influence in the promotion of neighborly harmony. It should, however, always be borne in mind that the worker is dealing with a *home* club, and that the ideal is not attained unless the whole family group, father, mother and children, join in the interest, and at least occasionally share in the program.

What has been said in connection with the penny provident collecting of the necessity for regularity and abstention from almsgiving, applies with even greater force to the home library visitor. If visitors are irregular in their attendance on the club sessions, the clubs will soon cease to exist. If they themselves act as almoners, the clubs will soon be shunned by the children of self-respecting parents, and will run considerable risk of becoming agencies of harm rather than of good.

Another consideration must be borne in mind. As any neighborhood group is very likely to include representatives of many forms of faith and unfaith, most home library associations have pledged themselves, tactily or explicitly, to respect all religious convictions and to say nothing in praise or disparagement of any creed or sect. This means, of course, that no direct religious teachings may be given. Ethical and moral ideals may and should be inculcated, but visitors should be mindful of their obligations to the children's parents, and should avoid the slightest approach to proselytism. The books should be carefully selected with this in view, and any discussion of differences in faith, or of the tenets of any body of believers, should be checked at its beginning. Nothing will more surely or deservedly cripple the usefulness of a home library than carelessness in regard to this matter.

It is not easy for an individual or a small group to start home library work unaided, as in addition to workers, money is needed to provide cases, to secure and keep up a supply of books, and to meet incidental expenses. In some places the cost of the effort is materially reduced by coöperation with the public library, which may furnish books free for this purpose. In other places the work is carried on by the public library itself, as a natural extension of its legitimate activity. In cities where this is not the custom and where the library authorities are not willing to coöperate, general contributions of books may be secured, or Sunday school classes or King's Daughters Circles may be persuaded to provide libraries as well as workers.

The methods of securing the equipment and visitors must vary from place to place, but there is little room

for variation in the really important features of the work, which are that it should be carried on in the home, that the clubs should be kept so small that each child may be well known to the visitor, and that the latter should be on the alert to see and utilize every opportunity for friendly helpfulness to the children, the parents and the neighborhood. Without a visitor who is able and willing to take this rôle, the work will always be unsatisfactory, no matter how good the selection of books offered, or how perfect the equipment in other respects; but with such a visitor it is difficult to see how any other form of work can afford opportunity for more far-reaching and valuable results.

CHAPTER XXIII

BOYS' CLUBS

SOME observer has divided the human race into men, women and small boys, declaring that while a little girl is usually a woman in miniature, a boy is not an embryonic man, but an entirely distinct species, with his own fairly well defined laws, traditions and ideals. Certain it is that the boys of the poorer classes present a more apparent, and, in some respects, a more urgent problem than do the girls. The girl can usually be made more useful about the house than the boy, and this, coupled with the fact that even the most careless or the most handicapped parents feel more responsibility for keeping their girls off of the streets at unseemly hours than they do for the boys, and the further fact that in every class the conventional standards are higher for the girls than for their brothers, tends to keep them from open breaches of the law. Their lives may be dull and narrow; they may be set to work too early, or brought up under conditions which make it next to impossible that they should fulfil their future duties of wifehood and motherhood in any but the most unsatisfactory manner; but the chances are that the majority will keep within the conventional bounds, and that the proportion who will ever see the inside of a police cell is very much smaller than in the case of the boys.

In fact, the conditions of life for boys in many of our cities are admirably fitted to make criminals of them. In many places the street is the boy's recognized play-

ground; in some he has no other. But since the streets are primarily intended for the traffic of the city, and since the small boy's most innocent amusements will probably interfere seriously with this traffic, it follows that many things in themselves perfectly harmless or even commendable must be forbidden to the street boy. Respect for authority is not his strongest characteristic, under any circumstances, and when he finds that a game of ball on the street, or of marbles or tag on the sidewalk, is forbidden under almost the same penalties, enforced in precisely the same way, as petty theft or even more serious offences, his ideas of moral values are apt to become confused. In one city recently two little fellows were brought into court charged with having tied strings to tin cans and dragged them over the sidewalk. Of course, the noise was unpleasant to anyone in the vicinity; but equally of course, the little fellows who found themselves arrested, brought into court, lectured and finally released under threat of some undefined but dreadful penalty if they ever repeated their offence, were not likely to be much impressed by the sweet reasonableness of the forces of law and order.

The street boy almost inevitably tends to look upon the policeman as his natural enemy, bent upon depriving him of every enjoyment, governed by a code unknown to him, of which the only comprehensible feature is that it involves interfering with him whenever he is having a particularly good time. Naturally the boy sets himself to outwit the police, and without the slightest inclination toward viciousness, he may easily become a confirmed lawbreaker.

Again on the street a boy finds companions of sorts. The instinct of association is strong in him; he allies

himself with the others of his own neighborhood and the gang is born. But the gang cannot exist without associated activity of some kind. A boy's ideal of what is admirable and delightful involves above all else activity and daring. He is truly Rooseveltian in his liking for people who "do things." Moreover, the things must be both courageous and interesting. One student of the subject gives an amusing as well as an excellent illustration of this taste:

"I once made a study of the small weekly magazines that are sold for a nickel, and that may be described as the yellow literature of boyhood. I pursued this study . . . because I felt that they were expert witnesses as to the boy's tastes. They are published to sell; the object of their existence is to make money and to make it out of boys; therefore, they must suit the taste of boys, and presumably succeed in doing so. In the very first one of these magazines that I read the hero starts out in the afternoon to go to a clambake. As he approaches the seashore, where the festivity is to take place, he is confronted by a masked ruffian, who jumps out from behind a tree and puts a pistol to his head. The boy quickly but firmly knocks the masked ruffian down, takes away his pistol, and is about to tear off his mask, when he hears terrible yells coming from the direction of the beach and rushes through the woods just in time to find a bull about to kill one of the girls. He puts the bull out of business by the simple process of shooting out his eyes with the revolver; explains to the owner, who turns up just then, in a few well-chosen words, that the bull was making a nuisance of himself and had to be restrained; and then, immediately after a heavy dinner of clams and pie, he very appropriately takes part in a swimming race. He gets ahead of his rival in the race by rounding the mark inside of him, and is just going to win when the masked ruffian, with another masked ruffian, makes his appearance in a dory

and begins batting him over the head with an oar—or rather trying to do so, for every time the masked ruffian strikes, the boy dives and comes up on the other side of the boat. At last the masked ruffian gets on to his rhythm and hits him just as he comes up. The boy is stunned by the blow and immediately sinks down bump onto the bottom, where he would have drowned if his defeated rival had not dived and rescued him. Well, these are just a few little preliminary stunts, introduced to whet the reader's appetite for the real climax, which comes later on in a ball game, in which, of course, the hero greatly distinguishes himself.

"Now that story shows what is the boy's idea of spending a pleasant afternoon—the sort of routine that would seem to him thoroughly satisfactory and desirable."[1]

The ordinary boy realizes that such delightful adventures are not for him, but nevertheless the street offers possibilities of danger and of daring. Unfortunately, most of the things involving these qualities are illegal, and the more interesting they are the more society frowns on them. Consequently the boy who is most admired by his companions is likely to be the greatest lawbreaker among them. It does not particularly matter in what way he has broken the law, except that the greater the risk he ran, the greater his credit. Every other boy wishes to prove himself equally bold and adroit, and the easiest, almost the only way of proving his qualities, is to undertake illegal, immoral or criminal enterprises. Some of the most valuable characteristics of the boy, his activity, his daring, his love of adventure, his desire for association, his hero-worship, are responsible for the formation of gangs and their degeneration

[1] Joseph Lee, Proceedings of National Conference of Charities and Corrections, 1904, p. 463.

into bands of young hoodlums. These qualities must have expression; if the boy can find a legitimate outlet for them, well and good; if not, he will still find an outlet, but the result will be bad for the boy and for the community.

Such an outlet the boys' club aims to give. "The club is the only weapon with which we can successfully attack the gang," says Jacob Riis. It appeals to precisely the same qualities as does the gang, but in the club they are enlisted on the side of law and order and progressive development. The club gives the boy what he wants under conditions which make it good for him to have it. Its importance and its possibilities have come to be so clearly realized that in one form or another it is found in connection with almost all centers of social work. Its value is not confined to boys of the poorer classes. The Young Men's Christian Association all over the country has boys' departments in which the club is utilized for rich and poor alike. Every social settlement has its system of clubs among the boys of the neighborhood. In fact, one highly successful settlement, Lincoln House, in Boston, grew out of a boys' club. Every active church has its guilds or other organizations for boys. And apart from all these and from the innumerable small clubs formed by private initiative, there is a National League of Boys' Clubs, with huge clubs established in various cities, and a membership of many thousands.

For those who are inaugurating work among boys one of the most interesting questions is the relative merit of the large versus the small club. Advocates of the latter form claim that the most important thing is to get hold of the individual boy, and to gain over him an

influence which shall be truly helpful through the troubled passage from boyhood to manhood. This, they say, is impossible unless the group is so small that the leader can know every boy personally and intimately. Most of the church and social settlement clubs are formed on this basis. The group is small, homogeneous, and is apt to be pretty closely guided by its leaders.

The supporters of the larger club, on the other hand, insist that a leader may be well and effectively known by many more boys than he can possibly know himself, and that the *esprit de corps* developed by a large body, and its opportunities for a wider usefulness, more than offset the closer touch possible in the smaller group. The large clubs frequently have hundreds of members and possess their own buildings, containing gymnasiums, swimming tanks, game rooms, library, equipment for manual training, and for such special activities as may possess a peculiar interest for their constituency. These buildings are usually kept open every night in the week,—a point in their favor as against the small club, which rarely meets more than twice a week, and more generally only once.

Whatever the relative advantages of the two forms of work, the beginner will certainly find it well to commence with a small group. The large club pre-supposes an organization, financial backing, an experienced leader and some volunteers, all very good things, but not always attainable. The small club, on the other hand, may be started anywhere and at any time, with a minimum of expense and formality. The only really indispensable thing is a good leader; given that, the club will succeed, though its meetings be held in a barn or a hall bedroom, and its equipment be conspicuously non-exist-

ent. Without that, its success will be problematic, though it have every possible advantage of building and equipment and cordial backing.

The importance of the leader is so well recognized, and so much stress is laid on the responsibilities of his position, that one sometimes marvels how any human being can be found to accept work of such far-reaching demands. "Mr. Mason suggests as the easier qualifications for such a leader that 'he must necessarily have the magnetism of Moses, the patience of Job and the wisdom of Solomon.'" It is necessary to remember that here as elsewhere the worker may fall far short of the ideal and yet do good service. He really cannot succeed, however, and would do better not to attempt the work unless he possesses tact, adaptibility, persistence and an unwearying interest in boys.

In this, as in other lines of philanthropic work, it will be an advantage for the beginner if he can serve an apprenticeship with some established club under the direction of an experienced worker. In most cities and in many towns this is easily accomplished. Wherever boys' clubs are in operation there is a demand for workers, and a volunteer who is willing to take the work seriously will be welcomed with open arms.

Where no such clubs exist the aspirant may gain some useful hints by studying the published accounts of work done elsewhere. The annual reports of boys' clubs, of settlements and of Young Men's Christian Associations will be found full of suggestions. It must be remembered, however, that the work must adapt itself to local conditions, and the beginner should be on his guard against concluding that because one form of activity has proved highly successful in a given place

it is necessarily suited to the boys of his neighborhood. An extremely practical and suggestive little manual for a would-be worker in this field is The Boy Problem, which, in addition to a study, based on psychological principles, of what boys' clubs should do and be, gives a useful bibliography of the literature of the subject.[1]

It will ordinarily be found that a club, to succeed, must include some form of physical activity. Even those associations which are formed for purely religious purposes have found it well to add a gymnasium, or to provide some practical and definite outlet for the boys' energies. As a rule boys are interested in most forms of handicraft or of manual training. Such work is valuable in the highest degree, not only for its immediate and practical results, but for its indirect training in the relation of cause and effect. "In any work of this kind a boy comes to see, with a sureness which admits of no discussion, that it is execution and not intention which counts, that no matter how good his meaning, his corners will not fit unless his work is true. He comes to see the inevitability of an effect, and to realize the utter uselessness of hazy good will. And he carries the lesson on with him, out into the world outside of his club room."

Ethical and moral instruction may and should be given in many ways, but indirect methods are best here. A boy is apt to resent direct preaching, while he is quick to take an implied moral, or to thrill to an ideal set before him without a too obvious application. He is not apt to accept the leader's ideas of what constitutes goodness and manliness without discussion, but if the latter's

[1] The Boy Problem, by William Byron Forbush, The Pilgrim Press, Boston.

conceptions are well founded the boy will admit their value, if he is not pressed too hastily.

One club worker tells a story illustrating the gradual effect of the club life. A club had been formed among some street boys who were frequently in conflict with the police. As it happened, no trouble of this kind occurred until something like six months after the club was formed, when one of its members was arrested for some aggravated offense, and fined. The leader laid before the club members the fact that this boy was guilty of a breach of good citizenship, that there was no question of his guilt, and that they, as good citizens, ought to mark their disapproval of such practices by suspending him from the club or otherwise punishing him. The matter, however, would be left entirely to them for such action as they thought best. Greatly to the disappointment of the leader, the club unanimously voted not to suspend the erring member, but instead to raise a sum for the payment of his fine.

Two years later, in the leader's absence, a somewhat similar case occurred. Without waiting for the leader's return, the boys promptly passed a resolution to the effect that the offending member had, by breaking the laws, brought discredit both on himself and on the club, and that in addition to the fine imposed by the city he must pay another fine to the club, or else withdraw from its membership. The influence of the club in this instance had been so slow as to be almost imperceptible from month to month, but it had been thorough. The group had been transformed from a gang of young hoodlums, banded together to outwit the law when possible and to help one another evade the penalties for its infraction, to an association of young citizens, anxious

to do their part in maintaining the reputation of their city and their own organization.

The importance, the methods and the possibilities of work of this kind among boys form far too large a subject to be more than touched on here. It is work which is pressing more and more to the front as we come to realize the value of preventive as opposed to reformatory measures. It is difficult work, demanding patience, courage, and devotion of a high order; but it is work of unlimited possibilities, and of results important beyond estimation. And for those who understand and love boys it is work of the highest interest, profitable in the time that now is and full of promise for the time to come.

CHAPTER XXIV

INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL CLASSES

ALTHOUGH many forms of manual training are often given in boys' clubs, such teaching is distinctly a secondary consideration. The main purpose of the club is to give the boy opportunities for legitimate enjoyment in helpful surroundings, to counterbalance the temptations of the street, and to throw around him influences which shall guide his development along right channels. If carpentering and work in iron are found useful for these purposes, carpentering and work in iron will be taught, just as baseball and swimming and crokinole will be encouraged, if they seem to meet the boys' needs.

In the industrial classes, on the other hand, far more stress is laid on the training itself. The classes are usually formed under the guidance of some body which wishes to do more than merely to give this training, but nevertheless the teaching is felt to be important enough to justify their existence, even were there no ulterior purpose. Usually some form of industrial training may be found in connection with every working girls' club, every social settlement, every Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association, and every institutional church. A full consideration of its various aspects would require far too much space; it will be sufficient to discuss briefly a few of its forms in which the non-professional philanthropic worker can best render service.

Cooking, sewing and educational classes are those in

which volunteer service is most apt to be sought, perhaps because it is more easily secured for these than for classes demanding special technical training. Of these perhaps the cooking classes are the most directly and obviously useful. It is a truism that the poverty of the poor is rendered worse by the inability of many of the housewives to get the best returns from their household expenditures. They do not know how to buy to advantage, in the first place, nor how to cook properly what they have bought, in the second. There are numerous exceptions, of course, but too often the frying-pan represents their chief idea of cookery. The relative values of foods, the advantages of variety in diet, the adaptation of food to varying ages and conditions, the effect of different methods of cooking,—all these are sealed mysteries to them. It is accepted among them as a masculine peculiarity that men want meat, so if there is a man in the family the frying-pan comes into play; if there is not, the women and children too often live in a haphazard way on fruit and articles from the nearest delicatessen shop.

"I'm trying to do a missionary work with my soup kettle," said the head of a day nursery. "Many of my mothers work in the mills all day and stop here for their children on their way home. They so often had a bag of bananas with them that I enquired about it and found that for a good many of them their supper would consist of bananas and tea. They've been working all day, and are tired out, and as they say it's too much trouble to start up a fire and cook something hot. Think of nothing but bananas after eleven hours in the mills."

Certainly one cannot blame a woman who after a long day's work feels no inclination to cook a hot meal, but

often the case is not much better among those who are not working out of their own homes. Fruit, usually over-ripe, and therefore sold at a reduction; fried meat and potatoes, usually soggy from too much grease; pie of a baker's making, and tea in unlimited quantities: these are too often the staples of their diet. Workers in the temperance cause assert, with considerable appearance of reason, that bad cooking at home is one potent cause of drunkenness. No one will be inclined to dispute the likelihood of this who has ever spent a week at some fourth-class country hotel, or been obliged to frequent some of the poorer restaurants of a large city. However that may be, bad cooking is unquestionably one cause of the prevalence of dispepsia, of the lack of physique among the children, and of the early breakdown of both men and women.

Ordinarily the wives who are responsible for this bad cooking have had no possible chance of learning anything better.

"More than half of my children come to school with the door key on a string around their necks," remarked a teacher in one of the poorer neighborhoods.

"What does that mean?" asked the visitor.

"That both the father and mother are at work," responded the teacher, "or that there isn't any father at home, and the mother works, so that the oldest child has to act as guardian of the house. The parents go off before the children are awake, and don't get back until six or seven in the evening. The children get their own breakfast and luncheon, or go without, just as they feel inclined."

Naturally these children receive scant instruction in household duties from their over-tired and hurried

mothers in the little time the latter are at home. The girls usually learn to make tea—a simple process, which merely involves keeping the teapot, filled with fresh water whenever it begins to get low, in a hot place on the stove, and adding tea from time to time. They pick up a knowledge of how to fry things, and evolve for themselves a theory that if you wish to stew the meat the natural and proper way is to put it on in hot water and boil as hard as possible. If the stew thus produced seems lacking in flavor, make up the deficiency with onions. They gain an empirical knowledge of marketing by being sent out for what is needed. Armed with this training, they go, as soon as the school laws permit, into shop or factory, and remain there until they marry. They bring to the new ménage absolutely no ideas of domestic economy or real home-making, and it speaks well for them and for their husbands that the experiment is so often reasonably successful.

It is to remedy this lack of training that cooking classes are established. In some places cooking is taught in the public schools, but in many others it is looked upon as a fad with which the curriculum cannot be weighted. Even where it is so taught there will ordinarily be found an ample field for cooking classes among those who for one reason or another have not been able to take advantage of this training.

It will, of course, be much easier for the volunteer to undertake work along this line in connection with some body which has already established classes, and has ready at hand the meeting place, the equipment and the members. If this is not possible, however, such a class is not a difficult one to establish. To find a suitable meeting place is apt to be the greatest trouble. The

ideal thing would be to meet in the kitchens of the members, as the teaching would then necessarily be adapted to the means of cooking actually possessed by the learners. For obvious reasons, however, the class members are apt to object to this method. In these days many churches have kitchens connected with their parish rooms, which offer an excellent place for such classes in connection with church work. Or, if a volunteer worker has a long-suffering mother, she may find her own home affords an advantageous place of meeting.

Two points need special attention in these classes: that the lessons should not involve the use of implements the girls cannot well possess, and that the work should be kept practical. It must be remembered that in most of the homes of the poor there is not a large supply of kitchen furnishings, and the lessons should be given as nearly as possible under the conditions in which the learners must apply them. Common sense is necessary in the application of this principle. Some workers tell proudly of having used a tin can for a rolling pin, and punched holes in the bottom of another can to make it serve as a pepper shaker, and so on. This is carrying adaptability to a ridiculous extreme. With kitchen furnishings as cheap as they are in these days, any woman who keeps house at all can contrive to have a rolling pin and a few other essentials, and it is poor judgment to encourage her to make shift without them.

With regard to the practical nature of the instruction given, it should be borne in mind that the best results can be obtained by a little flexibility. The learners will usually be either girls or young women, and while the most important thing is for them to learn to prepare simple, nutritive dishes, they will infallibly demand

instruction in making cakes, candy and ices. Teaching how to make these latter may be quite as practical as teaching how to boil potatoes. Knowledge of how to prepare such dishes may lead to the substitution of healthful and well made deserts for the cheap pastry of the corner baker, and the dubious preparations of the street vendor of ice-cream. Moreover, by the judicious admixture of such alluring features the learners may be led to bear patiently reiterated instruction in the plainer and more substantial dishes.

Most established cooking schools have graduated courses of instruction, explaining, as each method of cooking is taken up, the principles on which it is based, and leading gradually from the preparation of the simplest possible dishes to the higher forms of cookery. It is not difficult to secure these outlines, and though the volunteer worker will frequently find it necessary to modify them to suit the limited time or needs of her pupils, she will find them helpful and suggestive. The effort should be to give the learners some knowledge of the food values of different articles, and of the close relation between nutriment and health, some familiarity with the general principles of cooking, and a thorough drill in preparing some of the more common articles of food. This object cannot be attained all at once, or without serious effort on the part of the instructor, but the end is worth working for.

A variation on the ordinary cooking class is the course in cooking for invalids offered by some organizations, usually in connection with a course of training in simple nursing. This is of distinct value, apart from the course in nursing, but it does not make such a wide appeal as

the plain cooking, and is more in the nature of technical training.

Sewing classes are perhaps more generally used than classes in cooking, partly because it is easier to obtain instructors for them, partly because a suitable place and equipment can be more easily provided, and partly because there is usually a more enthusiastic response to any attempt to start them. They differ widely from place to place, ranging from the elaborate course in dressmaking, taught by an experienced dressmaker, and intended to turn out pupils capable of earning a living by their trade, to the instruction in patchwork and "over and over" given to little groups of little girls. In girls' clubs sewing often takes the place of some more active form of manual training among boys. When the members of the class are young, generally instruction will be given in the more elementary kinds of sewing, and the pupils may be passed from class to class, until they become accomplished needlewomen. When the learners are older, they are usually impatient of such detailed instruction, and demand practice and assistance in making some particular article. Classes in millinery are apt to be very popular in the spring and fall, when the learners are anxious to provide themselves with new hats, but unattractive in midsummer or winter. Classes in shirtwaist making hold their own at any time, and instruction in dressmaking, as a whole, has a fairly steady support.

None of these classes, however, are likely to develop much feeling of solidarity, or to form the basis for an enduring relation. The learner comes to them for instruction in a particular matter, and when she has got that, the class has served its purpose and she drops out.

For this reason it is more satisfactory to carry on such classes in connection with a well established organization, in which there is already a fairly developed club sentiment, than to conduct them as detached experiments.

Educational classes hardly need comment. Usually they are conducted either among young people who wish to fit themselves for better paid or more interesting work than their education as children prepared them for, or among foreigners who wish to acquire our language. Sometimes classes begun with these modest purposes have developed into elaborate courses, carrying the student through a well planned program and providing cultural as well as utilitarian training. This, however, is unusual, and is probably hardly to be achieved except in a large city and under peculiarly favorable conditions. Generally the instruction given will be in some of the simpler branches, or in some study with a distinct commercial value, such as shorthand, bookkeeping or mechanical drawing. Since much more satisfactory work can be done with small groups of scholars, there is generally a demand for all the volunteer teachers obtainable, and the beginner will find little difficulty in securing an opening.

The most important qualification for such work is faithfulness to an engagement. In most cases the students come to the class after a full day's work, and for a teacher to miss a class appointment except for the gravest reason, shows as great a lack of consideration as of reliability. In addition, the work demands considerable tact and adaptability, since many of the students are both physically tired, and unaccustomed to sustained mental effort, so that careful handling is

required to keep their interest alive. In general, however, it is much like any other kind of teaching, requires the same qualifications and is carried on in the same manner.

CHAPTER XXV

CLUB WORK AMONG ADULTS

"THE adult," says someone, "is the unit of alleviative work, while the child is the unit of preventive work." It is for this reason that work among children is usually the earliest field of effort entered by any social agency, and that clubs and classes among children are many-fold more numerous than among adults. This is natural and right; the hope of the future lies with the children, and where effort must be limited it is infinitely wiser to spend it among them than in an attempt at bettering conditions among those whose lot is already determined.

And yet work among adults has its preventive side, too. Whatever tends to make the parents of a family more temperate, more interested in their own home and in life in general, whatever enlarges their outlook and adds knowledge to their affection, tends directly to make the home a better place for bringing up children, and to enlist parental influence on the side of their right development. Sometimes this effect is very evident, as was shown in a mothers' club recently, where a group was found listening intently to a member's account of how she had tried to impress upon her foreign neighbor that it wasn't wise to give samples of everything the family ate to a child less than a year old. "I told her all about how delicate a little baby's stomach is, and how pickles and such things would make it sick, and how it wouldn't ever have any digestion if she did like that, but it wasn't

no use. 'Good food, good food,' was all she'd say. Them dagoes is ignorant people, anyhow."

"That's so," chimed in another. "There's one lives on my floor and I don't believe one of her children has a stitch of underclothing. The poor little things sit around on the floor, and the cold air coming in from the crack under the door, and nothing in the world on but little calico dresses. They've always got colds."

And then developed an informal discussion of the many various ways in which the children of the neighborhood were wrongly fed and clothed—a discussion which delighted the heart of the club leader, because she knew that a few years before, at the time the club was formed, there was hardly a woman in it who wouldn't have indulged in some or all of the practices they were criticising so sharply today.

While clubs among women often do some of their best work along the lines of instruction in home-making, very naturally clubs among men work in entirely different directions. Generally a club of men is formed primarily for the satisfaction of the social instinct, and whatever features may be added one of its most important preventive functions is that of offering a counter attraction to the saloon.

Few persons who are not directly interested in philanthropic work realize how little opportunity the day laborer has for recreation except in drinking places. According to the strenuous standard which many consider obligatory upon the poor, a workingman's home should be the center of all his interests, and he should not desire any recreation outside of it, except, perhaps, an occasional Sunday School picnic to which he can take his wife and all the babies. The chief trouble with this

theory is that it has no connection with the actual facts of the case. When a man who has been working hard all day long, often under trying conditions of heat or cold or malodorous surroundings, comes home to a crowded tenement with a tired wife and half a dozen children, each in the way of all the rest, it is hardly worth while to point out to him the pleasures of an evening in the bosom of his family. It does not materially affect the situation that his wife needs a change as much as he, and that it would be a kindness for him to take care of the children and give her a chance to rest. Generally speaking, he will not do it. He needs recreation, and in the majority of cases he will go where he can get it. Far too often the only places open to him are the saloon and the cheap theater.

Of these, the saloon is the more likely to receive his patronage, not necessarily from any desire on his part for liquor, but because it offers the most for his money. There he can find warmth and light and abundant companionship. If he wants to talk with acquaintances, to play a game of cards, to read his paper quietly, or simply to sit in comfort and look on, it is all his for the price of a glass or two of beer. There is no other place where he can get so much for so little. The Young Men's Christian Associations are meant for a somewhat different class of men. The trades unions and mutual benefit associations meet only at intervals, and do not as a general rule maintain a hall for use as a club room outside of the times of meeting. The public libraries are often too far away to be reached, and while, if near enough for practical use, they furnish a comfortable place in which to read, they do not permit smoking and usually make no provision for satisfaction of the social

instinct. Church and mission reading rooms are apt to be hedged about with restrictions, and barred off far more effectually by the working man's conviction that they are charity affairs, and that if he enters them he does not go as a self-respecting man, managing his own affairs and paying for what he gets, but as an object of philanthropic effort who has bartered away a portion of his independence, and must, as part of his bargain, submit to patronage and condescension from the managers. Of course this feeling is often most unjust to the promoters of such places, but it exists and must be taken into account.

It is a curious thing that while this need of social recreation has been strongly felt by the working people, they have made very little effort to meet the want through their own initiative. "The most careful search has failed to reveal in any of our American cities native clubs among the older men of which the primary idea is recreation and fellowship. . . . Social clubs among wage-earners are a positive necessity, especially in our intense American life. They serve as a center in which the pent-up social energy can find normal expression. Their absence means that this energy will find expression in other ways."[1]

It is only within a comparatively few years past that this need has been recognized, and that efforts have been made to meet it. In a few places clubs have been instituted among the working people which are meant to be self-supporting. The cost of maintaining club rooms which shall be always open, of providing for the necessary service and equipment, and of meeting running expenses is so large that there is great difficulty in sus-

[1] Substitutes for the Saloon, p. 80.

taining such clubs, and their field is necessarily limited. More often some person or organization supplies a part of the cost, giving the building and equipment, for instance, and providing a part of the current expenses. Usually under these circumstances a membership fee is charged, sufficiently large to keep the members from feeling that they are sacrificing their independence. They know that these fees do not cover the cost of maintaining the club, but feel about it much as does the college student who knows that his tuition does not nearly equal the cost of the college course, but does not dream of considering himself an object of charity on that account.

The best known example of this kind of club is the Hollywood Inn, at Yonkers, New York. In this case a building worth $150,000 was given by the originator of the interprise, a Mr. Cochran, and yearly contributions of considerable amounts have been found necessary in addition to the annual membership fee of three dollars. The house is fitted up with reading, game, smoking and music rooms, class rooms, a public hall, a library, lavatories, billiard rooms, etc., and one floor is reserved for boys under eighteen, who have their own clubs there. The Inn has been an undoubted success from the beginning, but the cost is too great to permit it to be generally copied.

Numerous organizations, however, have tried to provide in more modest fashion for the wants of men. Such an effort need not demand much initial expense. A couple of rooms,—one for reading and smoking, one for games,—in a crowded part of town, a supply of books, papers and games, and a tactful, cordial manager, who will be able to prevent possible excesses with-

out interfering unduly with the independence of the club members, are the essentials. If such a place is opened, there is little difficulty in gathering the men for a beginning and forming a rather loose union. From this minor groups are apt to be organized, the men dividing up according to their special tastes, as for music or natural history or economic discussion. The greatest danger for such a club lies in too much supervision, and the volunteer worker can often render best service by helping to collect the sum needed above the membership fees for maintenance, by aiding, when possible, to work out plans suggested by the men themselves, and by keeping hands off pretty severely.

Another form of clubs for men is found in connection with some settlements, in which a graded series of associations exists, running from early childhood through adult life. Here a club member passes naturally from one to another, his companions going with him. Lincoln House, in Boston, has worked out this system more completely perhaps than has been done elsewhere. A resident of the House briefly outlines the plan as follows:

"The plan may be tried within a settlement or apart from a settlement. Apart from a settlement a name for such a social institution as I have in mind would appropriately be 'Social Union,' for the plan means a union of social clubs. First there is a large kindergarten, then a children's club, a girls' club, a boys' club, a young women's and young men's club, a women's and a men's club. The tots go from the kindergarten at six to the children's club; at ten the girls and boys go to the boys' and the girls' clubs; at sixteen to the young women's and the young men's clubs; at twenty the young men become members of the men's club; at marriage the girls

go to the women's club. Thus there is an ascending scale of clubs, representing the whole family."[1]

The peculiar benefit of this plan lies not only in the fact that it maintains the hold once established over the individual, but also in that it provides a common interest for the whole family, parents and children alike. The objection is sometimes brought against clubs that they take their members away from home and tend to weaken the family tie. This objection is not wholly valid, since the club more often takes its members from the street or saloon than from the home, but it must be admitted that such organizations frequently pay scant attention to the family as a whole. The Lincoln House plan does away with this difficulty. By giving each member of the family a club interest it supplies them with a common experience, increases their respect for the clubs and for each other, and strengthens the family bond by a community of sentiment and interest.

Where this plan is not in operation it is very desirable that clubs should be established among adult women. Their need of social recreation is as great as in the case of the men, while their opportunities for gratifying it are still smaller. They do not have even the little variety made by going out to their work in the morning and coming back at night. Shut in to a monotonous round of housework, without resources in themselves, and with none of the knowledge of what their work means and of how to do it which might make it a delight instead of drudgery, it is no wonder if they grow dull and narrow, or if they devote themselves to gossip, too often malicious, or waste their time in endless discussion

[1] T. S. Alexander, Address before Newport Charity Organization Society, Jan., 1900.

with their neighbors of the most trivial details of their common life. They do not often take to the saloon, but the pail of beer sometimes plays a part in these informal coteries. That it does not more often do so is strong testimony to the inherent strength of character of the working woman. For them a woman's club may mean the coming of a new interest which transfigures the whole of life.

Clubs for women of this kind need much closer oversight and direction than those for men. The women are not used to speaking in public except on occasions when they all speak at once. They have little initiative, shrink from responsibility in the club management, and have almost no idea of amusing themselves. When, after some years of club life these disadvantages have been overcome, it has been found that they still need guidance, and that when the club management is left entirely to their hands factions arise, the officers take sides and use their positions for partizan purposes, and such troubles develop that the women themselves ask for the resumption of the earlier supervision. This, of course, would not apply to those who have graduated from children's and girl's clubs into organizations for women, or to those who in trade unions and similar bodies have been trained in united action for a common end; it applies only to those who are wholly untrained in organized action, and whose first step outside of the narrow round of their own household is taken when they enter the woman's club.

This difference between men's and women's clubs means that the latter offer more opportunities for active work on the part of the philanthropic outsider. Patronage and condescension are equally out of place, but

the women's clubs usually need more help in amusing and keeping interested their members. Ordinarily such clubs take up some definite program, cooking or sewing or home-making, or the care of children, or discussion of current topics. The scope of the work varies widely according to the capacity of the members. Informal talks on every day matters are usually appreciated, and the more concrete the subject the better the talk is liked.

"The topic of our first formal discussion, informally treated, of course," says Mrs. Betts, in describing one such club formed in New York, "was 'How long after the hair is out of curl papers is it becoming?' and this led to a general talk about the wife's keeping herself tidy and pretty." It is interesting in this connection to notice that when Mrs. Booker Washington began club work among the negro women one of their first talks was on the topic: "What is the effect on the features of wrapping the hair with strings?" Both talks were very successful.

In general it will be found that any discussion of personal appearance, of the simpler rules of hygienic living, of the illnesses of children, with rules for their prevention or for their treatment if they have developed, of how to make the most of what they have and how to increase the attractiveness of their homes, interests the women and may lead on naturally to a consideration of the most serious responsibilities of the wife and mother. Talks on municipal housekeeping and the topics of the day follow in natural sequence, and the club becomes the medium through which the woman comes to take some interest in the outside world, and to perceive the relation of the family to the community.

Naturally the volunteer who wishes to take part in such club work must have clearly in mind what she wishes to share with the women, and must have studied the art of presenting facts in an interesting fashion. Moreover, she needs to be very sure that she knows something of the home conditions of her audience, else her remarks may be worse than valueless.

"She meant well," said the club director, "but she puzzled the women. She was talking about the urgent need of privacy. 'Every child,' she said emphatically, 'ought to have a room to itself, but if you aren't able to give it that you certainly can see that it has a separate bed shut off by screens from the others. They sell very nice little cots so cheap now that I'm sure every one of you could manage it by a little planning.' The women listened dazedly. It was not only the price of the cots, though that would have been an impossibility for most of them; the question of space was still more serious. Most of them lived in tenements with two bedrooms, each just large enough to hold one bed touching the wall at the head and the foot. Most of them, too, had at least three, many of them five or more children. 'She's an awful nice lady,' said one of them afterwards, but I guess she must live in a hospital. Where'd I put five beds with screens 'round them? I never slept in a bed to myself in my life, and mostly we think we're pretty lucky when we don't have more than three in a bed.'"

But to speakers who understand the conditions under which their audience live, and who have something practical to say, the women show themselves remarkably responsive. What is learned at the club is taken home and put into practice for the benefit of husband

and children, often with far-reaching results. The club furnishes at once a stimulus and a standard for its members; it broadens their sympathies and quickens their interests, and apart from its immediate and practical results, it often exercises a vivifying influence upon the whole family life.

To summarize: clubs for adults are more difficult to start and to maintain than are clubs for children, but are greatly needed by men and women alike. For men, the main requisites are to provide suitable meeting places with opportunities for amusement, and then to leave them to work out their own salvation, with few restrictions of any kind; for women there is need of much more oversight and assistance. The club for men serves its greatest utility in providing a counter attraction to the saloon; the club for women in providing an escape from the narrowing conditions which too often characterize their home life. More effort must be made to amuse the women, and in doing this much really educative work may be carried on. For both men's and women's clubs there is a wide field, and their opportunities of usefulness are so abundant that the worker may well feel compensated for the effort needed to overcome the difficulties in the way of establishing and successfully maintaining them.

CHAPTER XXVI

SOCIAL SETTLEMENTS

"In whatever country of the world, in whatever social condition thou art placed, it is with the oppressed thou must live, for one-half of ideas and feelings are lacking in those who live only with the great and happy."

THE settlement movement is one of the most striking features of recent times. Its growth has been phenomenal. Beginning in this country in 1887, when Dr. Stanton Coit founded the Neighborhood Guild in New York, it has grown until in less than twenty years we have considerably over a hundred settlements. It has been adopted by religious people and free-thinkers, by Hebrews, Roman Catholics and Protestants alike, as the most effective form for giving expression to their sense of human brotherhood. While not in its original conception a charitable movement, it has done much to improve the charities of every city where it has been tried. It has provided unique opportunities for sociological study; it has lent valuable aid to every forward municipal movement; and it has given a chance which cannot elsewhere be secured for rich and poor to become acquainted with one another, to learn why each looks at the world as he does, and from this fuller knowledge to gain fuller sympathy and understanding.

The movement has taken on so many forms and the term settlement has been used so loosely that it is difficult to find a definition which will cover all its manifestations. Beneath all the variations, however, a few essential features may be found. Primarily a settlement

consists of a group of cultivated people, men or women or both, living by choice in a poor neighborhood, sharing the outward conditions of the life around them, striving to become friends with their neighbors, to share with them their greater opportunities, and to learn from them in turn the lessons their different environment has taught. The fundamental idea is friendly participation in the life of the community, sharing its difficulties and sharing also the means which either settlement resident or local resident possesses of righting these, or of rising above them, if they are inevitable. When once this idea was formulated its possibilities were recognized, and it has been adapted to a variety of purposes, but the causes which led to the rise of the movement and to its rapid development must be sought in the social conditions of the last century.

Throughout the greater part of that period there was observable a growing dissatisfaction with the social situation, and an increasing conviction that no man's duty to his fellows could be accomplished by the exercise of charity alone. Charity relieved conditions, but left causes untouched. Moreover, it could reach only the more material forms of destitution. There were hosts of working people in every large city who never lacked food, but whose lives were barren and starved. Their surroundings were unhealthful and unlovely. Their opportunities for education were small, and for social relaxation smaller still. Travel, art, literature, healthful recreation—all these were unknown lands to them.

The well-to-do saw them vaguely and cursorily at times when business or pleasure took them through the poorer districts, or when they were engaged in charitable work among those fallen from the independence held

very dear among them. Sometimes a book written by one who had worked in such fields startled the comfortable by its revelations; sometimes an agitator made himself heard outside of his own narrow circle, painting lurid pictures of what life was for his fellows, and threatening wild things to come. But no one seemed to know exactly how the well-to-do might cross the chasm separating them from the poorer classes, how they might learn what were the conditions really prevailing among the latter, and how, if these were not what they should be, the situation might be improved.

Apart from this feeling of an unfulfilled duty toward one's less fortunate fellows, there was developing a strong conviction that life ought to mean something wider than existence within one class, however cultivated that class might be. To live only among those whose lives are the same in antecedents and surroundings as one's own, to make friends only with those who can return the same coin of friendship one gives them, never to get away from one's own point of view, nor to see life from the standpoint of those to whom it has meant an absolutely different, often an almost antagonistic existence—all this seemed narrow and petty. Life, it was felt, ought to be broad and comprehensive. One's poorer neighbors might lack many things one had, but they possessed other experiences, perhaps as well worth understanding. A desire for self-culture, if no other motive came into play, ought to involve some experience among different classes.

Moreover, there was a growing feeling of the social implications of *noblesse oblige*. One could not live one's life rightly by fulfilling the requirements of personal honesty and uprightness, by discharging one's duty to

one's family and neighbors solely in that sphere of life in which one happened to have been born or placed. "The time may come," said one of the promoters of the movement, "when the politician who sells one by one to the highest bidder all the offices in his grasp will not be considered more base in his code of morals, more hardened in his practice, than the woman who constantly invites to her receptions those alone who bring her an equal social return, who shares her beautiful social surroundings only with those who minister to a liking she has for successful social events. In doing this is she not just as unmindful of the common weal, as unscrupulous in her use of power, as in any city 'boss' who consults only the interests of the ring?"

These seem to have been the leading motives underlying the settlement movement—a growing sense of brotherhood, which, carrying with it increased responsibilities, demanded fuller knowledge that these might be honestly met; a desire for a wider and fuller life, a life which should not be confined within the limits of one social class; and the growing perception of the need for a social as well as for a personal righteousness, a need which could only be satisfied by bearing one's share of the community burdens, and doing one's part in the struggle to lighten these.

To satisfy these desires the originators of the settlement movement decided to live among the working people, as nearly as possible under the same conditions as they. By sharing the material conditions of their lives, they could gain that knowledge of what these were which must precede any effective effort to improve them. By making friends, simply and naturally, with their working class neighbors, they would satisfy their aspira-

tions for a part in the fuller life of humanity. By sharing with them their greater opportunities and privileges, they would satisfy to some extent the imperious demand of the growing social conscience, and discharge the duties of which the increasing sense of the brotherhood of the race had made them aware. So they went to live among the working people in the poorer quarters of our large cities.

It was obvious that merely living in a tenement in a poor neighborhood would accomplish very little good for anybody; to carry out their plans the residents must make friends with those around them, and must devise means for sharing with them what they most enjoyed in the life closed to their neighbors. So it inevitably came about that a settlement should be the center of a varied social activity.

As it is easier to make friends with children than with older people, settlements in the United States have rather generally begun by forming children's clubs, opening day nurseries or kindergartens, and generally working among the little people. To these activities are usually added in swift succession, clubs for boys and girls, clubs for young men and women, debating and reading clubs, classes for various kinds of mental and manual training, libraries, stamps savings agencies, dancing and music classes, loan exhibitions of pictures, travel clubs, and so on, through a long list of neighborhood activities. In every possible way the settlement strives to be of use to its neighbors, to bring to them the opportunities they miss elsewhere, to share with them whatever of culture and aspiration the residents possess, to fit them to meet more successfully the material conditions of their lives, and to open to them the higher

avenues of enjoyment from which their environment might easily debar them.

Besides this immediate and personal helpfulness, the settlement strives to benefit its neighborhood through public and municipal action. "The curse of the poor is their poverty," and too often the worst abuses of municipal misgovernment are found in the crowded quarters where they are most harmful. If the streets are left uncleaned in the wealthier portions of a city, the residents know how to make such effective protest that the matter is set right; in the poorer quarters, where rubbish accumulates far more quickly, where the children pass most of their free time on the streets, and where neglect is most immediately harmful, a dishonest contractor may scamp his job by the month and no one knows how to bring him to account. Living under the same conditions as the poor, the settlement residents come to know by personal and first-hand knowledge the abuses to which they are subjected, while their former training teaches them how to set about righting matters. Moreover, by their situation in the midst of the victims of wrong conditions, the residents have exceptional opportunities for striking at the root of the trouble, the ignorance of their neighbors. As Professor Henderson puts it:

"The residents, just because they live on the ground and suffer directly from vicious conditions, become interested in the lot of the neighbors. You cannot photograph a smell or transmit a headache by telephone, but if you live in a poor district you need no rumors and no witnesses to convince you. The huge volumes of black smoke roll from tall chimneys into the windows of the Settlement and cover books and curtains with soot, and

begrime faces, necks and hands. Nausea and fever warn them of the causes of sickness and death and give them the right of self-defense.

"Therefore they naturally make common cause with their neighbors. They may begin by a personal appeal to the health officers or to the alderman. Occasionally this is fairly successful. But so long as the people have insanitary habits and customs the public authorities can accomplish little. Ignorance is the first enemy to fight. The people can get anything they want if they will unite and ask for it persistently. Back yards, drains, alleys, walks, street cars cannot be clean and wholesome without reformation of habits. Therefore with infinite tact and patience the residents must teach the principles of hygiene and sanitation."[1]

In regard to the moral evils of a locality the work of the settlement is no less valuable. Few can have forgotten the effective help lent to the "red light" campaign in New York by the residents of the different settlements. Ordinarily the work against such conditions is less direct. The provision of proper places for young men and young women to meet, and of suitable recreation under morally healthful surroundings does much to keep young people out of danger. The establishment of clubs and classes, providing an interest independent of the saloon, does much for the temperance cause. The teaching given in sanitation and personal hygiene, the instruction in cooking and home-making, the chances for gymnasium work and for fresh air outings, all tend to improve the physique and to render physical temptations less attractive, while opportunities are given for becoming absorbed in higher interests which crowd out the

[1] Social Settlements, p. 130.

lower amusements leading into danger. The whole influence of a settlement is cast on the side of temperance and morality.

Settlements may or may not do directly religious work, according to the purpose of those establishing them. Usually they find it inevitable that they should participate to some extent in philanthropic work. Frequently they are regarded as being themselves philanthropic institutions, a view against which many of their originators protest. "Working people," says Miss Addams, "live in the same streets with those requiring charity, but they themselves, so long as they have health and good wages, require and want none of it. As one of their number has said, they require only that their aspirations be recognized and stimulated, and the means of attaining them put at their disposal. Hull House makes a constant effort to secure these means for its neighbors, but to call that effort philanthropy is to use the word unfairly and to under-estimate the duties of good citizenship."

Clubs and classes are common to practically all settlements, but there are many other lines of activity in which they exhibit wide divergencies. Some take an active part in the labor movement in their localities; some make a special feature of industrial training; some strive especially to reach the foreign element, and to help the new comers to develop into good citizens as speedily as may be; there are settlements in which the educational idea is emphasized, and others composed of trained nurses, in which the major part of the work naturally lies among the sick; in fact, there is hardly a field of effort in which they cannot make themselves felt for good, and there is hardly a form of ability or knowl-

edge to which they cannot offer an opportunity of usefulness.

As its name implies, a settlement involves resident workers who shall settle in the selected locality. Usually there is one, a person of experience and training, at the head of the settlement, with perhaps several paid workers on the staff. In addition, in the larger settlements, there will be residents who give their services free and meet their own expenses for the sake of doing such work. It is not possible, however, for these official members of a settlement to carry on all the work that an active organization wishes to undertake and must undertake if it is to fulfill its purpose. Wherever, therefore, a settlement exists, there is a demand for volunteer workers. Clubs must be formed and supervised, children must be amused, neighbors must be entertained, libraries must be managed, savings must be collected, fresh air work must be carried on, flowers must be distributed, neighborhood gatherings arranged, classes must be taught, gymnasium and manual training given, visits made among the neighbors, medical help secured for the sick or crippled or injured,—there are a thousand and one directions in which help is needed. The man or woman who wishes to give some time to social work but does not know how to find an opening, cannot do better than to visit the nearest settlement and offer his services. There is work for all who are willing to give their time faithfully and regularly, work which is at once interesting and useful, carried on with the stimulus of fellowship and organized effort, and under conditions which the individual working alone could not possibly secure.

If a given locality possesses no settlement a would-be

volunteer worker will find it well worth while to make a visit to some neighboring community where one is maintained, and to secure the yearly reports of the larger and older settlements. The record of their activities, which has only been hinted at here, cannot fail to be at once suggestive and inspiring. It is impossible without organized effort to undertake anything like the work of the settlement, but single workers may, from the accounts of what they are doing, learn to make their own efforts more effective and to pave the way for the stronger work of such an association.

PART IV.—General

CHAPTER XXVII

CONCERNING GIVING

A GREAT deal has been said and written about the danger of giving unwisely when one responds to an appeal for alms. Not so much has been said about the difficulty of giving wisely when applied to for a contribution to some society, cause or institution, yet the problem is no less perplexing. Few of us have any means of deciding on the merits of a cause presented to us. Persons whose means permit large subscriptions are usually sufficiently in touch with charitable movements to have some idea of the relative value of the various enterprises appealing for support, or can afford to have the matter looked up when a new society or institution presents its claims. But the majority of those who give small sums have little opportunity of discriminating. Applications are made to them, and they are anxious to give what they can toward any good cause, but they know nothing of the work they are asked to forward. They cannot take the time to investigate it themselves and do not know to whom to go for reliable information. Often there is no agency in their community which could furnish such information. So they give, hoping the enterprise is a good one, but thinking it better to err, if error is inevitable, on the side of liberality than to risk refusing aid to a movement deserving of support.

There is no question that this benevolence is often

abused. Perhaps these undesirable solicitors might be roughly divided into two classes—those who simply appropriate to their own uses all or most of the money they collect, and those who use it for the support of some society, institution, or form of charitable work which is either unnecessary, harmful in itself, or so badly managed that its effects are bad.

Probably the members of the first class are met with more frequently than the second. In this division are found those technically known as "charity promoters," men and women who make good livings from the benevolence of the general public. Another body, depending for their gains on the good will of the religiously inclined, support themselves by carrying on so-called missions, in which the principal activity is the delivery of innumerable harangues by the founder. Another group, probably smaller, since the danger of detection and punishment is greater, collect for the avowed benefit of non-existent institutions or societies, trusting that they may make their harvest and get out of the neighborhood before the imposition is discovered. Others vary this procedure by collecting in the name of some local organization of which the merits are well known, but from which the solicitors have received no authorization, and to which they make no returns, simply pocketing the whole of their collections. Others collect money for the benefit of some individual, who may or may not exist, and who, if existent, will probably never see a penny of the money given, but of whose sufferings they tell a moving tale. In short, the fraudulent collector has nearly as many different devices as the fraudulent applicant for alms.

Probably of all these different groups, the charity

promoter is the one whom the average giver most frequently encounters. He—or quite as often she, for men and women alike resort to this device—first selects some popular charity of a given locality, by preference taking one which deals with children or invalids, since these classes make the strongest appeal to the kind-hearted, and then arranges with the managers of this charity to give an entertainment on its behalf. His proposition has a specious air of generosity. He has some concert or stereopticon exhibition or drill or something else which has proved a success elsewhere, and knowing the merits of this particular cause, he will be glad to help it along. He will bear all the expenses of advertising, selling the tickets, and giving the entertainment, and will guarantee to the charity the sum of one hundred dollars, or two, or more, according to the size of the place and the prospects for large returns. Sometimes he offers to give the entertainment and turn over to the charity all above a certain percentage of the net gains, but as this retained percentage is conspicuously large, the proposition is apt to rouse criticism, and he much prefers to arrange for a lump payment.

If the offer is accepted, the promoter begins an active campaign of solicitation. Usually he has a corps of sellers of tickets for the entertainment, who visit house and store and office, urging all to buy for the sake of the charity with which the arrangement has been made. Nothing is said about the terms of the contract, and the buyer takes it for granted that what he pays goes to the charity. Frequently the promoter adds another line, selling advertising space on the program of the entertainment. Here, again, the advertiser innocently supposes that his money goes for the benefit of the society

or institution named, and pays for an advertisement he doesn't want, and which he knows will be of no benefit to him, simply to help along a good cause.

The promoter publishes no account either of what he has taken in or of what his expenses have been. He hands over to the local charity the amount agreed upon and carries off the rest of his gains. It is not possible to say what these are, but there is no question that in the majority of cases the proportion which goes to the charity is very small, and that the share he keeps for himself is correspondingly large. He is usually able to pay extravagantly his corps of ticket sellers, who are frequently confederates, to live in lavish style, and to keep up his scale of expenditures for years, all on the money which the givers supposed was to go to benefit some charity.

The defence of the community against the promoter must come primarily from charitable societies and institutions. Obviously, if they refuse to lend their name, the promoter is blocked at the beginning of his plan. When, however, associations are found which are willing to play the rôle of decoy in this fashion, it is yet possible for the public, by the exercise of some care, to protect itself from the imposition. It is wise to refuse to buy tickets for such entertainments, or to advertise on their programs, unless one knows not only the society whose name is used, but the solicitor as well, or unless the latter, if unknown, carries a letter of endorsement from some responsible person, setting forth the terms of his contract with the association, and giving the telephone number of the endorser. Under these circumstances it takes but a few minutes to verify the story told, and the person approached can then use his own

judgment in regard to purchasing, feeling that whether he buys or refuses, he at least knows what he is doing.

The members of the second group mentioned, the originators of so-called missions, depending for support on the skill of their founders in securing contributions, present a curious study, ranging as they do from deliberate impostors to honest but highly injudicious zealots. They do not ordinarily possess much ability, even the impostors working along rather simple and conventional lines. They are entirely incapable of such flights of fancy as Mark Twain's "King," who pretending to be converted at a country camp meeting, told a blood curdling story of his former life as a pirate and collected a rich harvest of dollars to enable him to go back to the Indian Ocean and convert his fellow miscreants. As a rule, they do not attempt anything more original than to claim that they are converted drunkards and that they have felt a divine call to preach the gospel, and they do not ordinarily gather in much more than is sufficient to keep them living in a hand to mouth fashion.

On the other hand, their enterprises require almost no capital, and are susceptible of being repeated indefinitely. A man wishing to take up work of this kind may dispense with any plant altogether, simply beginning to preach on some square or street corner, though it is better for him to have a room on some street in the poorer quarters, with lights and a few chairs. A few hymn books and a musical instrument of some kind are desirable additions. There are in every city numbers of persons who have nothing to do and no place to go after the day's work is over, and who, lounging along the street, will inevitably be attracted by an open room in

which services of any kind are going on. Curiosity and a desire for emotional excitement will attract others, and the mission worker promptly makes use of the fact that all these come to his mission as proving the needs for its ministrations, and the interest of the classes who are to be benefited. There are others, good and sincere persons, to whom a religious work is a religious work, regardless of details as to purpose, fitness of the worker, adaptation to the needs of the locality, or other debatable features, who will be attracted, will begin to take part in the speaking, and who will in all honesty endorse the worker when he appeals for support. They will give what they can afford themselves, and will press friends and acquaintances into service. The amount thus received, however, is seldom enough for the needs of the worker, so he goes afield, urging, either by letter or in person, the claims of his mission upon the public generally, but more especially on those who have the reputation of being at once generous, able to give, and interested in religious work. When one locality has been exhausted, the mission drops out of existence, and another is opened under a different name in some other quarter, or in another city.

The worker of this kind does not usually ask on the ground of his own necessities, but, evading the question of his support, or else claiming that friends are caring for him, appeals for subscriptions nominally to forward the work. As no account is ever given either of the amount received or of the way in which it is expended, there is a rather strong presumption that he uses what he gets for his own purposes. Occasionally, however, he frankly appeals for support, and charitable individuals

and charitable societies alike are importuned to take care of him that he may devote himself to mission work.

"For over four years," said one professional worker, "I don't believe there was one period of five months in which Mr. and Mrs. Benson didn't come up before our council under one name or another. At the time of our first experience with them they were strangers and applied to us for help. After that, they always tried to stave off reference to us, knowing that our attitude wasn't sympathetic. The man claimed to be an invalid, but we were never able to find that anything in particular ailed him, beyond a serious disinclination to steady work. His wife was an able-bodied woman, but claimed that her time was entirely taken up in caring for her husband. A good deal of it, we knew, went into soliciting aid for the missions which she and her husband were always starting.

"They would open a mission—both of them had a gift of fluent language, and Mr. Benson, while declaring himself too ill for work, always explained that the Lord strengthened him to declare the word—attract as many people as their room would hold, and usually have several professed conversions within the first few days. Then they would make a regular canvass of their neighborhood, or generally, Mrs. Benson would do the canvassing, while Mr. Benson remained at home, ready to play the destitute invalid if anyone called. Usually it wouldn't be long until someone came to us to see if we couldn't get some help for this most interesting couple. The people who came weren't inclined to believe our story, and I didn't wonder at it. The air of meek resignation with which Mr. Benson would pray that my heart might be softened and that I might never suffer

for my persecution of a poor invalid whose only desire was to be an instrument in the hand of the Lord, used to half shake my own belief in the rightfulness of my attitude.

"The end was invariably the same. They would secure liberal support, and, according to their own statements, be on the eve of some grand undertaking, when their supporters would begin to grow uneasy. Rumors would begin to circulate about their way of living, and what they were doing with the money collected. They never had the self-control to live up to their professions long at a time. Reports of unseemly conduct would become more numerous and definite, their adherents would grow more and more dubious, and then, some evening, the mission would be found closed, the Bensons would have disappeared, and for a time no more would be heard of them. Then in a little while more we always began to hear of another mission in some other locality, carried on by a saintly invalid and doing a wonderful work, but sadly hampered for lack of funds, and a little investigation would show that our old friends had re-appeared under another name. I should very much like to know how much they collected, first and last, from our town, and whether, when at last they disappeared permanently, they began the same career elsewhere, or retired on their earnings."

As a general rule, these exhorters, when not consciously impostors, are still unconsciously so. What they take for love of God and desire to serve humanity is frequently only a combination of emotional excitability, a love of being the center of a situation, and an unacknowledged fondness for escaping the drudgery of ordinary work and substituting for it the more interest-

ing career their fluency opens to them. There is very little reason for supposing that they do any real good, and much for thinking that money given them is wasted or even used harmfully. It is well to apply in their cases the plan suggested in regard to promoters,—to refuse to give unless they present credentials with the addresses of their endorsers so plainly given that these may be easily communicated with and the story of the solicitor verified.

There is no danger of refusing help to a genuinely good cause by following this plan, since if a man has a real gift for evangelistic work it is not ordinarily difficult for him to secure the support of some church or the backing of reliable persons. It may take him a little time to give such proof of his sincerity and ability as will be necessary to secure this endorsement, but this he should certainly be willing to give. Simply because a man has a certain fluency of language it is not reasonable for him to consider that he is divinely called to preach, without preparation or qualification of any kind; nor is it more reasonable for him to expect the public to feel itself called upon to support him, upon his mere assertion that he is able to do a good work. If he is not sufficiently in earnest about his evangelistic work to be willing to prove himself, he had better give it up at once, and no one need feel hesitant about refusing him support.

This same rule of refusing to give until proper credentials have been presented and verified would break up absolutely the business of the third group mentioned, the fraudulent collectors. Sometimes these collectors start out with no credentials at all, trusting entirely to their own ability to impress favorably those to whom

they apply. Sometimes they carry with them fictitious letters, describing the work of an imaginary institution and requesting subscriptions for it in the name of some equally imaginary official, who, however, fails to give any address at which he may be reached. Sometimes the proceeding is varied by carrying around a subscription paper, asking contributions for the benefit of someone whose distressed condition is set forth at length, the paper apparently having been signed by a number of well known people of the locality. Usually liberal amounts, supposed to have been contributed by these signers, are set down opposite their names, and many give on the strength of the cause having been apparently approved by these givers.

In any or all of these cases, it is well to insist upon having the addresses of one or more of those whose names appear on the papers and to defer one's subscription until these can be communicated with, and some assurance of the merits of the cause can be secured. If the collector is seeking contributions in good faith, the cause for which they are required cannot be injured by the delay of a few hours, or even of a few days, necessitated by this method, while if he is a fraud this very limited investigation will bring the fact to light.

So far we have considered only solicitors of the first general class, those who appropriate to their own use all or most of the money given them. A much more difficult problem confronts the giver when he is approached by solicitors of the second general class, those seeking aid for charities already founded or in process of organization, in which there is no doubt that the funds will be used for the avowed purpose, but in which there may be serious question as to the value of the

work done. In order to judge whether a given form of effort is desirable, one has first to know the whole philanthropic situation of the given locality, the character of the work proposed, the effect of such work in other places, and the ability and honesty of those undertaking it. The busy man or woman has no chance to obtain this information, and is apt to give or refuse rather blindly.

In the larger cities several devices have been tried to remedy this state of affairs. In most places the Charity Organization Society stands ready to look into the work being done by any philanthropic body, and to report to anyone enquiring whether its work is needed and whether it is well conducted. A refusal to recommend a given society does not necessarily imply any dishonesty or even any serious defect in its management. Its work may simply be unnecessary, a duplication of that already being well done by some other body, or it may be work which while good under certain conditions, is rendered useless or even harmful by local conditions. In a community, for instance, where the custom has prevailed of placing orphan or abandoned children in private families, and where the agencies engaged in this work are active and efficient, it would be in the highest degree undesirable to establish an orphanage of the conventional institution type. Often, however, recommendations are refused because of questionable or objectionable methods on the part of the managers.

In 1900 an interesting attempt to meet this problem was undertaken in San Francisco, where a Charities Endorsement Committee was formed by the Merchants' Association and the Associated Charities. It was agreed that all charities wishing endorsement must agree to certain standards. The most important were:

1. No charity endorsed by this Committee should lend its name to any charity promoter, or benefit by any entertainment given by such a promoter.

2. No such charity should pay its solicitor a commission greater than fifteen per cent.

3. The endorsement card given to every authorized solicitor should state both the purpose for which he is collecting and the amount needed, and donors should enter, under their own signature, the amount contributed by each.

Other rules were adopted referring to the management of the work carried on by the societies wishing endorsement. Thus relief societies must make prescribed investigations, and conform to certain rules regarding registration of cases. Child-placing societies must furnish full details in regard to children placed in homes, so that they may be visited and the excellence of the work be tested. Regulations suited to the nature of their operations have been adopted for other charities, and a formal endorsement is given only to those conforming to all requirements.

The result of the work of this Committee is said to be very satisfactory. Fraudulent solicitors and charity promoters have found their operations seriously hampered. Fewer appeals are made for money with the natural result that those made by authorized societies meet with a more liberal response. The pre-occupied man of business still has the option, if he chooses, of giving to unendorsed solicitors and running the risk of wasting his money, but if he wishes, he can protect himself against the swarm of miscellaneous applications, and make sure that what he gives goes to the purpose for which he intended it, and that it is administered in accord-

ance with certain accepted principles of wisdom and efficiency.

Where no plan of this sort has been adopted, and where no Charity Organization Society exists, the giver has little chance of bestowing his gifts to the best advantage. It is simply impossible for men and women as ordinarily situated to investigate the applications which come to them, and to distribute subscriptions according to the value of each agency. Two precautions, however, may well be observed and will serve as some guarantee against one's gifts being wasted or misused. It is not wise to support agencies which make a boast of giving to all who apply, without question or investigation of any kind. And it is not wise to give to any agency which does not publish a full statement of its receipts and expenditures, audited by some professional auditor, or some one known to be responsible.

In regard to the first precaution, it is now a pretty generally accepted principle that indiscriminate giving on the part of an individual is apt to cause far more misery than it relieves, and that money so given is not only wasted, but is actively employed in working harm. The mere banding together of several individuals and the widening of their field of work does not endow them with any supernatural wisdom, enabling them to dispense their gifts indiscriminately with any more prospect of good results than if they were working in their private capacities. In fact, as their work is likely to be more widely known, it is likely also to be more harmful.

The most common forms of such indiscriminate giving are perhaps the bread wagons, and similar methods of providing food, found in some of our large cities during the winter months. At some time during the

night, the time varying according to the judgment of those in charge, a wagon is sent to a certain spot, or a room is opened, and coffee and sandwiches, or bread and coffee, or some similar provision of food is dispensed to everyone who applies. For hours men can be seen standing in line, regardless of the weather, waiting for the distribution to begin, or for their turn to reach the wagon. Those in charge of the distribution lay much stress on the number of those applying, and claim, in effect, that this distribution is all that stands between hundreds and starvation.

Some light was shed on this proposition by the experiences of Mr. Albert W. Van Ness, who, in the winter of 1905, dressed himself in old clothes and joined the bread lines on several nights. What he saw lends itself rather irresistibly to the conclusion that this form of relief tends directly to attract to the cities where it is practiced men who are abundantly able to support themselves, and to maintain them there in indolence. It was a common matter for a man when he had been up to the wagon and received his coffee and sandwiches, to go back to the end of the line and come up again and again. When he began to be afraid that the dispenser of food would recognize him, he would hurry off to another bread line, and repeat the performance. As there is a limit to the number of sandwiches a man can eat at one time, the reason for this proceeding was not at first clear, but the men themselves explained that they were "stocking up" for the morrow. By slipping the sandwiches into their pockets they could easily get from these wagons a food supply for twenty-four hours. A little begging would enable them to secure tickets to some "Bethel" or "Shelter," where they could pass the night

in what they considered sufficient comfort, or they might even find a free lodging. Why should they work? They could live easily through the winter, and when spring came they would "hit the road" again, and take up the tramping life which society was sedulously making easy for them.[1]

The reason for the second precaution is clear; it is the only guarantee the giver can have that his money goes for the purposes for which it is given. There is much carelessness in charitable bookkeeping, and even when there is no question that the funds are honestly administered, accounts are often published in such shape that it is impossible to decide how the money has gone. In less reliable organizations this looseness of accounts makes easy the way to extensive peculations which may be carried on for years without detection. A number of organizations which solicit public support do not publish accounts at all, while others merely publish a statement of so much received and so much spent. Others lump together such dis-similar items that it is impossible to form any idea of what proportion of the expenditure went in any given direction, while others accomplish the same end by a free use of "etc."

Obviously, an income may be administered both wisely and honestly even though the published statement of receipts and expenditures may be highly unsatisfactory, but the giver has no means of knowing whether this is the case. No one who handles funds subscribed by others has any right to complain of being asked to keep such accounts of them that a professional accountant can see exactly how the money has gone. An itemized statement, approved by some reliable auditor, is the

[1] A Night with the Bread Lines, Charities, Vol. 13, p. 555.

giver's security. He expects a similar accounting from other agents to whom he entrusts his money, and there is no reason why he should make an exception in favor of philanthropic agencies. In fact, it cannot be said to be "in favor of." In view of the possibilities of dishonesty in handling charitable funds, those engaged in the work ought, in self-defence, to insist upon rendering such accounts. It is the only way in which they can protect themselves against insinuations which it is an easy matter for an opponent to make, and it is not surprising that more and more the workers themselves are urging the necessity of publishing such statements.

These suggested precautions may seem very inadequate. They certainly do not go far toward solving the giver's problem. But that problem, like so many others of these latter days, is due to changing social conditions, and cannot be met by private means. In any locality in which the charities are not so organized that there is some responsible central board from which information may be secured, the giver cannot be sure that his money goes as he wishes and intends. He can only, by following the lines suggested above and others which may be adapted to local conditions, avoid some of the risks of its waste or misuse.

CHAPTER XXVIII

INDIRECT SERVICE

In the preceding chapters an effort has been made to point out ways in which a volunteer worker might be immediately useful. In addition to the direct results secured, anyone taking up such work has an opportunity for indirect usefulness of no small degree in acquiring such information about a neighborhood as may lead to the improvement of its conditions. The friendly visitor or collector of stamps savings going week after week to a given district has, for example, an excellent chance to see how far the ordinary municipal regulations for the cleansing of the streets and the removal of garbage are obeyed, how well the laws concerning the sale of liquors and cigarettes to minors are enforced, what opportunities for amusement the residents have, whether the tenements are fairly sanitary and well kept up, how rents range, whether the school attendance laws are well enforced, and so on, *ad infinitum.*

If the visitor is acting for some strong and centralized society, this information may be of immediate use in enabling the organization to conduct a more vigorous campaign for improved tenements, execution of existing laws, passage and enforcement of better child labor laws, provision of opportunities for healthful recreation, and so on. If the visitor is acting independently, the information is still worth acquiring for possible future usefulness. Sooner or later the problems presented by all these matters will come up for solution, and their

right treatment must depend upon adequate information of what conditions really are. It is the tritest of truisms that no philanthropic work is of much value which merely alleviates existing troubles, leaving unchecked the conditions which produced them; but the conditions can be attacked only through full and accurate knowledge of what they really are and how they make themselves felt.

Generally when any campaign for improvement is planned, the first step is to secure a skilled investigator who, after looking thoroughly into local conditions, makes a report on their deficiencies. The work of a volunteer cannot take the place of this skilled investigation, but it may form a valuable adjunct to the latter. The reports of volunteer visitors may decide, in the first place, in what direction improvement is most needed, and then, after the campaign is begun and the report of the investigator has been made, the additional knowledge of the non-professional observers may have great weight in swaying public opinion. There is sometimes a certain distrust of the conclusions of an expert brought in from outside, a feeling that if he is not putting forth a wholly unfounded opinion, he is at least strongly influenced by preconceived ideas. "Of course he found bad conditions; that's what he's paid to do," is the summary verdict on such reports of certain opponents of reform. The conclusions of regular workers among the poor are not open to this criticism, and the consensus of their opinions must inevitably carry much weight.

Not all workers will feel competent to undertake this kind of observation, and many will be disinclined to it. Fortunately, excellent work may be done apart from it. One may be an admirable friendly visitor or a penny

provident collector or a home library or club worker without taking any part in neighborhood improvement work or sharing in any movement for better conditions of any kind. A good worker is not likely to take this attitude, for interest in the individual leads naturally to an interest in the conditions under which he must live and work, but still the two forms of effort are not necessarily inseparable.

When a talent for observation and an ability to set forth clearly and effectively the results of observation are found united in one worker among the poor, there is almost no limit to the good which may be accomplished. The work which Jacob Riis has done in New York is a good illustration of this. It is not too much to say that he has accomplished more for the abolition of the slums, for the movement for improved housing conditions and for the creation of breathing spaces and playgrounds in the crowded quarters of the city than any other one man. Yet he has never been professionally a charitable worker; he has never neglected the day's work of his own profession. But as he went about his work he saw under what conditions the poor lived, and what he saw he reported, bringing it before the public in books, in magazine and newspaper articles, talking of the matter wherever opportunity offered, lending the results of his experience to those who approached the question from another standpoint, joining in all forward movements, until, although he had never ceased from his daily labors in another line, he had become "New York's most useful citizen."

Whatever volunteer workers may feel about observation of general conditions, there is one social movement to which they can hardly refuse to give the aid of their

knowledge of abuses without the risk of doing serious harm through their sins of omission, and that is the campaign against child labor. Something has already been said about the necessity for seeing that the individual child is not put to work too early or under unhealthful conditions, but the larger question of the employment of children in general, demands a few words. As a movement this is decidedly recent. For a long time no effort was made to protect children from too early or too prolonged work except by the trades unions, which have consistently opposed most forms of child labor. Within the last twenty years the situation has been materially changed, and the greater part of the improvement has come within the last eight or ten. It is not necessary to go into the causes which have led to this awakening; it is sufficient to notice that there is a concerted effort to obtain proper laws regulating the employment of children, that a National Committee on the subject has been formed, that all over the country observers are at work gathering facts and noting conditions, that a Federal Children's Bureau is strongly advocated, that yearly, in state after state, laws concerning the subject are presented, and that their presentation is repeated until they pass.

The members of the National Committee recognize that it is neither possible nor desirable to impose one law, no matter how admirable, on all the states, regardless of their preparation for it. Legislation which outstrips public sentiment is useless, and in states in which the subject has received little attention it is wise to make haste slowly, and to strive for small gains at first. The ideal toward which they are working involves both a positive and a negative side, a "thou shalt," as well as a

"thou shalt not." On the negative side it is desired that no child shall be put to work until it is fourteen years old; that absolute proof of its age shall precede employment; that it shall have at least the ability to read and write simple sentences in English, and that it shall have attended school regularly for the school term preceding its employment; that it shall have reached the normal physical development for its age; that its hours of work shall not be unduly long, and that it shall not, at least under sixteen, be permitted to work at night; and that the conditions under which it is employed shall be reasonably safe, sanitary and moral. On the positive side it is desired that every child shall be kept in school until it has attained a certain minimum of education and has the physical development of a healthy child of fourteen; and that its attendance at school shall be regular and punctual. This of course involves the provision of sufficient school facilities, and the employment of attendance officers to ensure the children's presence, and to prevent parents, either through ignorance or greed, from depriving the child of its rightful amount of education and freedom from too early employment.

The visitor going regularly week after week to certain of the poorer districts is pretty sure to see indications of how well the laws are obeyed in these respects. The presence of young children at work in the tenements, or the repeated appearance of children of school age on the streets during school hours are sufficient evidences of the need for improvement, either in the laws or in their enforcement. The National Cossumers' League publishes annually a handbook of the child labor laws throughout the Union. This can be secured by writing to the headquarters of the League,

105 East Twenty-Second Street, New York, and by obtaining this the visitor may easily make sure what is the law in any given state, and who are the officers charged with the duty of carrying it into effect. Once informed as to these points, it is an easy matter to call attention to a violation of the law, and to repeat the notice until the matter is set right, or until it becomes evident that there is need for further agitation to secure the passage and enforcement of effective laws.

There are two reasons why visitors and charitable workers generally neglect this. Sometimes they think the situation of the family is so desperate that the children's labor is a necessity, and sometimes they think that the particular case is not important, that while the law is all very well in its way, the abuses of child labor have been much exaggerated, and it isn't necessary to take any trouble about the matter. The first objection has been touched on already. It cannot be repeated too emphatically or too often that no family ought to be dependent on the earnings of children under school age. If the destitution of the family is caused by the fault of the parents, it is an outrage that the children's only chance of rising to something better should be sacrificed to their indolence, intemperance or general worthlessness. If the want is due to misfortune, there are others than the little children on whom the burden should fall. It is the duty of the community to care for those who are honestly unable to cope with their reverses, and the public which tries to shift this duty to the shoulders of the children will later on pay a heavy price in worn-out, wrecked and wasted lives.

It would be too harsh to say that the apparent need for child labor arises from the wrong-doing of the

parents, yet that is in many cases the real cause. Every charitable worker knows how often the child who tries to gain permission to go to work before the legal age, or who is kept out of school and slipped into some odd corner of the industrial world, is the child whose father has deserted, or is intemperate or persistently lazy. The casual visitor sees the misery of the family, but does not look far enough into causes to see where the fault lies. Wiser laws dealing with intemperance, a greater emphasis upon the responsibility resting on a man to provide for his own family, punishment of his failure to do so by some penalty not, as now, apparently designed for the express purpose of injuring the wife and children, and education of the public in the duty of aiding sufficiently those families who from one reason or another are in a state of destitution,—such measures would reduce the evils of child labor to a large extent.

Another cause for child labor is found in the fact that in many forms of industry wages are too low. This side has already been discussed under the standard of living, but it must be mentioned here in justice to the many parents who would gladly give their children all possible advantages, but who are driven to put them to work by the pinch of actual want. It may perhaps be said that men who can earn only six dollars a week or less in the best of times, and who are liable to periods of dull work or none at all, have no right to assume the responsibilities of a family. The question perhaps admits of debate, but the fact remains that these men usually do marry, and that the family income is insufficient for the family needs. What is to be done? The puzzled visitor cannot solve the question offhand; it is fortunate if a solution can be found at all; but one principle should be

adhered to, that the children must be given a chance to rise to a better paying grade of work, and that this can be secured only by a strict enforcement of the child labor laws.

Many of those who make no effort to see that the children in the families they visit are not put to work too early are honestly unaware of the importance of the subject. Of all classes the children are the least articulate, and not until the harm has long been wrought does the general public wake up to what has been going on. For the most part we are comfortably convinced that abuses are not an accompaniment of latter day conditions, and that though, in Lord Shaftesbury's times, for instance, children were unquestionably put to labor too early and shockingly overworked, yet now there is little that really needs righting. This optimistic view is rather shaken by reading such bits as this, from the report of a doctor of the New York Infirmary for Women and Children, whose work calls her much among the tenements:

"As soon as a little child can be of the least possible help it must add to the family income by taking a share in the family toil. A child three years old can straighten out tobacco leaves or stick the rims which form the stamens of artificial flowers through the petals. He can put the cover on paper boxes at four years old. He can do some of the pasting of paper boxes, though as a rule this requires a child of from six to eight years. But from four to six years he can sew on buttons and pull basting threads. A girl from eight to twelve can finish trousers as well as her mother. After she is twelve, if of good size, she can earn more money in a factory. The boys do practically the same work as the girls, except that

they leave the home work earlier and enter street work, as peddlers, bootblacks and newsboys. . . .

"A child from three to ten or twelve years adds by its labor from fifty cents to $1.50 per week to the family income. The hours of the child are as long as its strength endures or the work remains. A child three years old can work continuously from one and one-half to two hours at a time; a child ten years old can work twelve hours. Obviously under such conditions the child is deprived of the two greatest rights which the parents and the state are bound to give each child, health and education."[1]

It is not probable that conditions of this kind exist at all generally, but the only actual surety we can have against their development is the enforcement of a good school attendance law. Obviously if the child is in school, he cannot be at work. He may be put to work before and after school hours, but at least he has the reprieve of the school period. When this safeguard is removed, there is room for abuses of every kind to creep in. Where children are not subjected to the dull and deadening round of labor described by Dr. Daniels, they are yet often employed under conditions which make it almost impossible for them to grow up honest, industrious and capable of intelligent application to one thing for any prolonged period. The writer has found children of nine kept out of school to set up pins in a bowling alley, or to make themselves generally useful at resorts of doubtful character. Physically these little fellows fare better than the children of their own age who are in other sections put to work in the mills or fac-

[1] Dr. Annie S. Daniels, Report National Consumers' League for 1905, p. 28.

tories, but what chance have they of developing into steady, reliable workmen? What likelihood is there that they will escape the contamination of their surroundings? Why should they not become drunkards or gamblers? Some, in spite of every obstacle, become good citizens after all, but no wise parent would be willing to take the risk for his own child, and no one working in the name of charity has a right to let another's child be exposed to it.

The movement for the proper protection of children is in its incipiency. It must make its way against ignorance and indifference and greed and the tremendous power of vested interests. It can be carried on only through unceasing effort, through study and propaganda and the slow enlightening of public conscience and rousing of public interest. Few volunteer workers have the time and the means to take an active part in it; but each can help it forward by reporting to the proper authorities each case of a child under school age who is kept from school, and continuing to report it until either the child is in school, or it becomes apparent that there is urgent need for a change in the officials charged with enforcing the law.

CHAPTER XXIX

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

"I REALLY wanted to do some work for people not so fortunate as I," observed a young woman, mournfully, "but I'm discouraged. I can't take a class or a club at a Settlement, because my time isn't at my own disposal, and I can't be regular in attendance. I haven't enough experience to take a family and visit it for the missionary society. I've talked with people interested in such work, and it seems to me they say nothing but don't. It's: 'Don't give to anyone without full investigation.' 'Don't do anything which will lessen their self-reliance.' 'Don't teach them to depend on you.' 'Take care that in trying to help them you are not weakening their natural family ties.' 'Don't waken in them desires which you can't satisfy.' 'Don't do this and don't do that,' until it really seems as if all that is left for me is to hand over my money and humbly retire from any effort to apply it myself. I suppose it's something that they'll let me give my money—they're always willing to take that, I notice—but isn't there any way in which a person without much time, and that irregular, and without any experience, can really *do* something?"

Probably there are many who would share her feeling. Numerous forms of work among the poor involve an amount of responsibility and of regular, sustained effort which makes them difficult, if not impossible, for many who would like to do something more than merely give. It may as well be recognized at the outset that most

philanthropic work does make rather heavy demands on the person undertaking it; it is not an amusement to be taken up or dropped according to one's varying whims. Nevertheless, there is a difference in the requirements of different kinds of work, and anyone really anxious to be of service can usually find some way open. Whenever possible the would-be-helper should seek the direction of some organized society or experienced worker, but when this cannot be done, it is still generally possible to find ways of making even irregular time effective. The following plans are merely suggestive of what may be done by those who cannot undertake much responsibility or give much time or money.

Most cities and towns maintain an almshouse or some equivalent institution. Among the forlorn flotsam and jetsam collected here one is apt to find at least a few women who are not up to the normal standard of mentality. They are not imbeciles, they are only not quite bright, and for their own sakes, as well as for the sake of the community, they should be kept under custodial care for life. In the most advanced states, these women are cared for in institutions for the feeble-minded. In the backward states, they are allowed to go free, except when illness or maternity brings them to the state care. In many communities, however, they find their way to the almshouse and remain there from an early age. They are not unkindly treated. They are well fed, comfortably clothed, and given sufficient employment about the institution to keep them satisfactorily busy. But there the list of their advantages ends. Usually they have no connections who care to visit them or to whom they could go for a change and a little variety. They have no family ties, no natural

outlet for their affections, no break in the monotony of institution life. They are practically in prison; it is a kindly and beneficent imprisonment, but it presents a dreary outlook to a girl of twenty, say, who sees before her nothing but successive years of routine, unbroken by the ordinary changes of life, unbrightened by friendship or love.

A little attention given by someone outside to one of these unfortunates would brighten her life immensely. It need not be a heavy tax on the one undertaking it. An occasional visit; a letter now and then; some little remembrance on birthdays and at holiday seasons, and similar kindnesses, which cost the giver little, would introduce a new element in the life of the inmate. The relation could be made to involve as much or as little as the visitor desired. Its peculiar advantage is that it involves less responsibility than almost any other form of friendly activity, and that it does not necessitate giving up a fixed and regularly recurring portion of time. On the other hand, it does not offer any brilliant or far-reaching results; it is merely a way of making life a little brighter to those for whom it is unusually dreary. Anyone who wishes to try it will usually have little trouble in obtaining the names of such unfortunates from the officials in charge of the institution. The latter will naturally wish to satisfy themselves of the character and good faith of the visitor, but that point once settled, they will ordinarily be most willing to coöperate.

There are other classes in the almshouses for whom friendly effort is needed. The old, especially those who are of the better class, and who have been forced into the almshouse by some unexpected reverse, may find pleasure and relief from the thought of their misfor-

tunes in an occasional friendly call and chat; reading matter and flowers may be sent; classes may sometimes be formed among certain inmates and handicrafts taught; volunteers from the outside may be of use in the entertainments given from time to time to the inmates; and other forms of usefulness, varying from place to place, may be found by consultation either with experienced workers, or with the officers of the institutions. But ordinarily these other lines of effort will require more from those undertaking them than the informal friendliness suggested above.

There are numerous forms of usefulness in institutions other than almshouses for those who have the time to undertake them. In children's hospitals, visitors who can be relied on to come regularly to amuse patients capable of being entertained are welcome. This work offers decided possibilities to those skilled in dealing with children. In one public hospital through which pass the poorest of its city, a young woman possessed of some leisure, a kindergarten training and much love for children, has formed a kindergarten class for all the children well enough to be interested by the games and songs and work. It is the first thing of the kind that has ever come into the lives of some of the little waifs who find their way there, and while it serves its purpose in amusing and training them while in the hospital, there can be little doubt that its influence reaches much further, affecting their lives long after they have passed on and given up their places to others. In homes for the aged there are numerous opportunities for usefulness. Life is apt to become a dull routine there, and any one from the outside who will come in to read or sing or chat with the inmates receives a cordial welcome.

But usually those undertaking any of these forms of friendliness must come at fixed and regular periods, and must be prepared to give definite time and effort to the service. It cannot be fitted into the chinks and crannies of a busy life as conveniently as the method first mentioned.

For those who can give a little money regularly, and who would like to have some personal knowledge of the effects of their gifts, combined giving is best. A group of persons willing to contribute a definite sum weekly, even though that sum be for each one very small, have before them a wide choice of usefulness. Generally any professional worker knows of families or individuals for whom continuous help should be provided. If a group decides upon the amount it can give, and then applies to such a professional worker, there will be, as a rule, no difficulty about finding some object which should appeal to the sympathies of its members. There are old people whose rent must be paid, or young girls struggling to support invalid parents on insufficient wages, or cripples who can only partially support themselves, or widows with children, or working men incapacitated by some accident or illness, for all of whom help is needed for a longer or shorter period.

One good direction for such group contribution is along the line of securing a sufficient supply of nourishing food for consumptives. In many places, perhaps in most, the means for taking proper care of tuberculosis patients are sadly inadequate. Hospital or sanitarium treatment may be secured for some few, but many go uncared for in the earlier stages of the disease, when it might be arrested by proper treatment without the cost and the interruption to home life of segregation. Fre-

quently one of the most difficult matters, in such a case, is to secure a sufficiency of nourishing food for the patient. He may be in the earliest stages of the trouble, able to keep about his daily work, but needing eggs and milk and substantial food of kinds and in quantities which the family income does not permit. Every doctor knows the perplexity of such cases. It is of little use to tell the patient to take such and such food; he cannot get it; and because he cannot, too frequently the disease gains ground until the harm is done and the sufferer is condemned to a lingering death.

The cost of supplying proper food in such cases varies widely, according to what can be done by the patient himself or his family, and the local prices of the kinds of food needed. In some cases a very trifling addition to the family income will meet the need; in others several dollars a week may be required. The situation of these consumptives appeals strongly to most persons, but in many instances those who would be glad to help are restrained by the consciousness of how little they can give. The group idea meets this difficulty. Fifty cents or a dollar a month would go a very little way in helping a patient, but if eight or ten combine and each give this amount a great deal may be accomplished.

Helping widowed or deserted mothers is another attractive field for group usefulness, and one which permits of wide variations, according to the circumstances of the recipient and the givers. The matter of pensions for such women has already been discussed. While this is the most effective form of aid there are unquestionably some who would be glad to combine for the purpose of helping a woman with a family to care for, whose means do not allow them to provide a regular

and sufficient pension. In such cases help might take the form of providing all necessary clothing for one child, or several, if the group felt inclined to take the heavier responsibility. It would be a relief to the mother to feel that she might dismiss all anxiety about the clothing of at least one child, and the work need not be a heavy burden for those who undertake it. A canvass among their own relatives and friends would secure a considerable part of what would be needed. Time to secure discarded garments, and sufficient skill in needlework to put them into good order, or to alter them to fit the child selected would be the principal demands. Some little money would be needed from time to time for shoes or other articles not easily procured second-hand, but as a general rule it would require but a small amount to make up deficiencies.

For those who can combine to raise a regular amount of money for the benefit of some such woman, a very attractive way of applying it has been indicated by the system of so-called scholarships, which the women's clubs of Chicago, at the suggestion of Miss Addams, volunteered to provide for all children whose exclusion from employment when the new child labor laws went into effect would work real hardship to their families. The argument had often been made that the working children were the sole support of destitute and widowed mothers, and that the prohibition of their work would mean suffering of the severest type. To meet this possible hardship in the enforcement of the law, the club women guaranteed that in every case where it should be found on careful examination that the child's wage was really needed to keep honest and industrious parents from suffering, they would supply the amount

which the child could earn weekly, on condition that he should be kept in school until the legal age for his withdrawal. The cases in which they have been called upon to supply these scholarships have been astonishingly few.

There is no doubt that in some cases widowed or deserted mothers evade the school laws through a real need of their children's earnings, but more often in such circumstances the little ones fail to get a proper education not so much because they are deliberately kept out of school as because there is no sufficient incentive for keeping them in. If the woman has to be both father and mother, both bread-winner and home-maker, necessarily one function or the other must be slighted. If her work keeps her at home, it also keeps her so busy that she has little time for the care of the children. If there is a baby, naturally the eldest child is kept at home to look after it, or, if that is not allowed, she will still be kept out at frequent intervals to help whenever there is any rush of work.

To the mother it presents itself as a very simple proposition. She must work that they may have food; the baby takes up her time and diminishes her earning capacity; how can it hurt Mamie or Katie or Nellie to stay at home from time to time to relieve her? "Sure, the child goes most of the time, and she's that bright she can easy catch up with the others." Or, if there is no baby, there are apt to be occasions when errands must be run, or when some work comes up in which little fingers can make themselves useful; all the pressure of circumstances is toward keeping the children at home, and only an external and but vaguely understood authority makes for their attendance at school.

If, on the other hand, the mother's work takes her away from home, she must ordinarily leave long before the children should start for school, and when the little people are left to get themselves off, it is not surprising if they are frequently late or absent.

The scholarship plan strikes at the root of this trouble by supplying a strong incentive for regular and punctual attendance. Let a person or group of persons decide on some stated amount which they can make up weekly, and let this amount be offered to the family, its giving being conditional on the regular school going of the oldest child—the oldest being selected because the temptation to keep this one at home is strongest. The amount should be paid each week on the presentation of a written statement from the child's teacher that he has been regular and punctual in his attendance. It should be understood that each absence will involve a deduction from the amount paid, and that each instance of tardiness will mean a similar though smaller deduction. These conditions should be enforced as strictly as would be done if the child were in a mill or an office. The givers should decide at the beginning what arrangement they will make about vacations, and what for absence from school due to the child's illness, so that from its outset the arrangement shall be on a strictly business basis. The child should feel that he is earning the money by attendance at school, and that, just as in any other case in which he might be earning a salary, its continuance depends upon his observance of the conditions agreed upon at the beginning.

With these precautions, this is a very satisfactory way of giving help, not only assuring that the assistance shall reach a family in need of it, but that in the process

of receiving help the child's teaching is made certain, and the whole attitude of the mother and children toward the school is altered. It is an unfortunate fact that in our dealing with the poor we usually are obliged to insist continually on the industrial side of life, and to lay all the emphasis on those traits which tend toward making or saving money. In putting into effect this method of help it is for once possible to lay stress on the non-commercial side of life, and to show that in the minds of many people and those not the least helpfully inclined, education has such a real and permanent value that it must be ensured to every child, even though accomplishing this end means a loss of money to those advocating it.

Naturally the forms of helpful work open to volunteers who can give but limited time or money contributions vary from place to place, and no category of them can be given. The first step for those wishing to undertake personal work is to find the representatives of charitable interests in their own community and to place themselves in touch with the professional workers. Through these they may learn the requirements of their own particular field, may find where the greatest need lies, and where they can be of the most use. Often the work which a beginner can do may not seem particularly interesting or important; it may involve a good deal of monotony and appear to have no immediate results. Yet this is only what beginners in other branches expect, and what all novices must go through. There is work for all to do, and for those who have the patience to serve their apprenticeship, there are results to be gained worth all and more than all that the training and the labor cost.

APPENDIX

So many good bibliographies of literature on philanthropic subjects have already been published that it is hardly worth while to attempt an addition to their number. Beginners in such work, however, are often puzzled as to what will best suit their needs, and cannot always get from bibliographies the advice they desire on this point. It is for such students that the following suggestions are offered.

Ordinarily, it is best to begin with some study of general principles. Charitable work has become so closely allied with all forms of social effort that general conditions must be taken into account before one can do good work, even among individuals. This involves some study of the whole situation, or, in other words, some attention to sociology. For those who are so situated that they can take a course in sociology under some competent instructor, or who can attend some school of philanthropy, the way is made easy. The majority, however, must perforce rest content with less thorough preparation, and their chief interest is to know what will most quickly, and with the least expenditure of effort and money, give them a working knowledge of the principles of modern philanthropy.

Probably the best book for a beginner is Warner's American Charities. This volume, which appeared in 1894, has become a classic of philanthropic literature, and there are no signs that its place will be taken by any more recent work, in spite of the rapid development of the subject. It gives a full and interesting

discussion of such subjects as the causes, social and individual, of poverty, the classification of dependents, with the methods of treatment adapted to the different groups, the inter-relation of relief agencies, the organization of charity, and kindred topics. No matter in what branch of work one is especially interested, a study of this book forms an excellent introduction, to be followed by reading along the particular line chosen.

The reports of the National Conference of Charities and Correction, which may be found in most public libraries, contain a fund of valuable information. Year by year this conference assembles representatives from all over the Union, and the papers read before it present the latest thought of the best known specialists in the various lines of charitable activity. By consulting the later volumes one learns what is now considered the best way of meeting a given need or difficulty; by consulting the earlier volumes, one learns by what steps and through what experiences the present position has been reached. For the student and the worker alike the value of these reports can hardly be overestimated.

After studying general principles, as given by Warner, some practical handbook of modern methods will be found useful. For those who wish to take up social rather than charitable work, Constructive and Preventive Philanthropy, by Joseph Lee, will give a good discussion of philanthropic work in its social aspects. Those who wish to undertake direct work among the poor will find the subject treated concisely, practically and helpfully in The Practice of Charity, by Edward T. Devine, Secretary of the New York Charity Organization Society. The same subject is discussed in fuller detail and with a more extended consideration of its

social effects in the same author's Principles of Relief. Both of these works have met with warm commendation, and both are of much practical helpfulness. Friendly Visiting Among the Poor, by Miss Mary Richmond, Secretary of the Philadelphia Society for Organizing Charity, is likewise an exceedingly useful book. The author's long experience, both in dealing with the needs of the poor and in training friendly visitors, has rendered her peculiarly qualified to explain the actual problems and difficulties which are sure to confront the volunteer. The work is practical throughout and the bibliographical references given in each chapter are especially useful to anyone wishing to extend his reading along a given line.

The reports of the larger societies will be found very suggestive, and may usually be had on request. The annual reports of such bodies as the National Consumers' League, the National Committee on Child Labor and the National Association for the Control and Prevention of Tuberculosis are both interesting and vitally important.

A good magazine is almost essential in order that one may keep in touch with the progressive development of thought along all charitable lines. Undoubtedly the best for this purpose is the magazine known first as Charities, then as Charities and The Commons, and now as The Survey, published by the New York Charity Organization Society. It is issued weekly, and is a necessity for any worker who wishes to keep informed on topics of charitable and philanthropic interest.

With the exception of the reports of the National Conference, the above books may all easily be owned by anyone who from choice or necessity wishes to possess

his own tools of the trade. For convenience sake, cost and publisher are appended:

American Charities, Amos G. Warner (T. Y. Crowell & Co., New York), $1.75.

The Practice of Charity, E. T. Devine (A. Wessels Co., New York), 65 cents.

Constructive and Preventive Philanthropy, Joseph Lee (Macmillan Co., New York), $1.00.

Friendly Visiting Among the Poor, Mary E. Richmond (Macmillan Co., New York), $1.00.

The Survey (105 East 22d St., New York), subscription for one year, $2.00.

Those who wish to go into the matter more deeply, may find some guidance in the following list secured by the Harvard Social Service Committee in 1902. Wishing to establish a library on philanthropic and industrial subjects, this body sent a letter of enquiry to a number of prominent workers in these fields, asking them to contribute a list of books, preferably ten in number, which were especially helpful to them, and to designate the one most helpful in each case.

"This letter," says Charities, "was sent to the following:

Miss Jane Addams, Chicago.
Frederic Almy, Buffalo.
Philip W. Ayres, Concord.
Charles W. Birtwell, Boston.
Miss Mary L. Birtwell, Cambridge, Mass.
Dr. Jeffrey R. Brackett, Baltimore.
Miss Mary Willcox Brown, Baltimore.
Edward T. Devine, New York City.
Robert E. Ely, New York City.
Homer Folks, New York City.

Miss Fannie Fowke, London.
John M. Glenn, Baltimore.
Hastings H. Hart, Chicago.
Miss Mary Richmond, Philadelphia.
Joseph Lee, Boston.
C. S. Loch, London.
Mrs. Charles Russell Lowell, New York City.
Miss Frances R. Morse, Boston.
Jacob A. Riis, New York City.
Miss Zilpha D. Smith, Boston.
Frank Tucker, New York City.
Robert A. Woods, Boston.

"The replies received from these advisers seem to indicate more adequately than any list of books hitherto made, what is the consensus of competent opinion concerning the books most necessary for students of philanthropy, and what is regarded as the order of their practical importance. In the list as printed below, the numbers preceding the name of the book indicate how many times each book was recommended.

(12) Friendly Visiting Among the Poor, Mary E. Richmond.
(12) American Charities, Amos G. Warner.
(10) The Practice of Charity, Edward T. Devine.
(8) The City Wilderness, Robert A. Woods.
(8) How the Other Half Lives, Jacob A. Riis.
(7) Rich and Poor, Mrs. Bernard Bosanquet.
(6) Philanthropy and Social Progress, Jane Addams.
(6) The Poor in Great Cities, Jacob A. Riis.
(6) Letters of Edward Denison, Baldwyn Leighton.
(5) Practical Socialism, S. A. and H. O. Barnett.
(4) Homes of the London Poor, Octavia Hill.
(4) The Industrial Revolution, Arnold Toynbee.

(4) Charity Organization, Charles S. Loch.
(4) Life and Labor of the People, Charles Booth.
(4) Aspects of the Social Problem, Bernard Bosanquet.
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